RELIGION AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY LEBANON

ABSTRACT

THESIS

SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

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IN

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BY

KALEEM AHMED

Under the Supervision of

Professor Mahmudul Haq

CENTRE OF WEST ASIAN STUDIES
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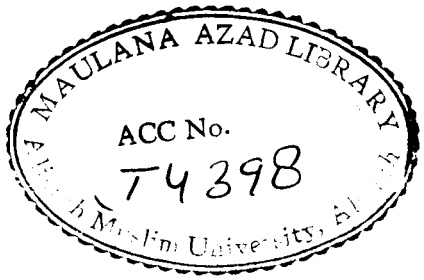

ABSTRACT

This thesis deals primarily with the religio-political development in Lebanon during its recent history. The political history of Lebanon is the history of intermittent warfare between the varying religio-ethnic groups. The internal contradiction and regional politics in Lebanon often assumed the form of religious struggle between the various warring groups. The Civil War of 1975-76 was mainly the result of internal contradiction and regional politics. To understand the origin of confessional politics in Lebanon it is necessary to understand the fact that the origin of religious warfare lay in the feudal set up which Lebanon has inherited from its past history.

The Druze constitute 7 percent of the Lebanese population. The sect originated in Egypt in the beginning of the eleventh century during the reign of the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim (909-1171). Druze carried to an extreme the Isma'ili doctrine according to which each of the attributes of God was made manifest to mankind in the personality of a Prophet or Imam. Druze dominated Mount Lebanon and their hegemony established in the early seventeenth century, remained unchallenged for a long time. Mamluks and later on Ottomans permitted the Druze to maintain their special feudal tradition and to manage their affairs as they pleased. But by the end of mid-eighteenth century the growth of the Maronite community in number and social importance had became a matter of political consequence. The Druze

ranks, on the other hand, had been steadily weakened by internal divisions. The policies of the Bashir Shihab II further weakened the position of Druze community who infringed upon the hereditory privileges of Druze feudal families. The Druze lost their former position as the dominant Muslim sect to the Sunnis with the establishment of Greater Lebanon. However, it was Kamal Junbalat who brought back his community at the centre stage of Lebanese, politics. No doubt, that the political and economic powers of DrRuze have been eroded. But they will continue to play important role in Lebanese politics due to their concentration in the, strategic Shuf and 'Aley regions and being a close knit society.

The origin of Maronites can be traced back to the 4th century Syrian hermit, St. Maron who started a religious movement in Homs, Hama and Aleppo. However, a monk from Antioch brought the Maronites to the high valleys of northern Lebanon in the 7th century. Following the establishment of the Emirate in 1590, Maronites began to move from northern Lebanon to southern Lebanon. Freedom and protection were extended to them by the Druze feudal lords in matters of personal safety and the, exercise of religious activities. The Maronites Churches in particular started to grow and flourish under the auspices of the feudal lords. In the early stages of economic relations between the Church and the feudal lords, the interests of the two parties converged: the Church was then the weaker and dependent partner. However, as its economic strength grew, the Church

started opposing feudalism not only to defend the rights of the peasants but also to defeat the feudal lords, whom it now perceived as its poltical rivals. The clergy were the first to develop the idea of a Maronite state, claiming that Mount Lebanon had for centuries been an independent or autonomous Maronite homeland. It was due to the efforts of Maronite Church and its Patriarch which ultimately led to the establishment of Greater Lebanon on 1 September 1920. Even after independence in 1943 the Church and its patriarch continued to play important role in the Lebanese politics and influence the course of development there.

Lebanon's Sunni community is of comparatively recent development. The population of Sunni sect was multiplied approximately eight times with the establishment of Greater Lebanon. The Sunni very much resented to the creation of Greater Lebanon. The incorporation of Sunnis areas in Lebanon involved a grave religious, cultural, political and economic crisis and a powerful emotional blow. Sunnis also resented the French mandate. In the beginning the Sunnis were reluctant to participate in the political process of Lebanon. They refused to participate in the census on the grounds that they were being defined as citizens of Greater Lebanon. Only in the late 1930s and 1940s, with the rise to power of young generation of Sunni leaders who had grown up under the new Lebanese poltical system, was the way opened to a modus vivendi between these leaders and their Christian counterparts. The Sunni community suffers today from numerous problems and difficulties. Sunnis do not have a

charismatic leader behind whom they could rally. They also have no political organization that appeals to the members of the community wherever they live. Furthermore, the regional particularist tendencies of the Sunnis appear to be greater than they are among other communities. Their traditional leaders are weaker today than they were in the late seventies. They proved weaker during the Civil War due to lack of military power. However, the political claims of the Shi'a were blunted in favour of sunni Msulims in the Taif agreement brokered by the Arab League. The powers of Prime Minister were increased and Sunnis were given 22 seats in parliament equal to Shi'a. Thus, it may be said that the Sunnis will continue to have sufficient political powers in near future.

Shi'a Muslim came into being as a result of a schism that took place in Islam in the decade after the death of Prophet Muhammad on the question of his successor (Caliphate). They are the oldest community in Lebanon. The socio-economic status of Shi'a fare poorly in comparision to their non-shi'a cohorts. From 1920s to the mid 1950s, Shi'a political representation was practically monopolized by the six prominent landowning families- the Asads, the Zeins and the Ossirans in southern Lebanon, and the Hamadehs, the Haiders and the Husseinis in Ba'lbek and Bint Jubayl. The social effects of the emigration to the Arab oil-producing countries in 1950s and 1960s were considerable. Tradtional notables and religious family lost much ground in favour of the wealthy returning migrants. Moreover, due to high birth

rate Shi'a community emerged as a single largest community in Lebanon. The Shi'a now had an active and radicalized intelligentsia, an ambitious and enterprising counter-elite, and other new strata with new demands. They began to challenge the rules of the game and to question the distribution of power and resources in the Lebanese system. In this context, the movement of Imam Musa al-sadr was born in 1970s, an expression of the demographic and socio-economic shift of the Shi'a from the periphery towards the city-state of Beirut. During the years before the outbreak of Civil War in 1975, the movement attempted to satisfy its social and political demands through various forms of mobilization, pressure and action. Imam Musa al-Sadr's mobilization strategy threatened both the traditional leadership and the left's hold on the young Shi'a. Sadr founded Amal, a militia group, attached to the Movement of Deprived, to protect the community in the Civil War. Two important militant group, Islamic Amal and Hizbollah, emerged after the Israeli invasion of 1982. These groups played important role in the withdrawal of Israeli troops to their self-proclaimed security zone and in withdrawal of Multi National Force from Lebanon. Although, the Taif accord of 1989 increased the political role of the speaker, traditionally a Shi'a Muslim who will now serve a four year term. Now the nomination of a prime minister by the President would require consultation with the speaker who conveys the results of binding parliamentary consultations. But the poltical claims of the Shi'a were blunted in the Taif accord in favour of the Sunni Muslims. The Shi'a gained

only three of the new appointive seats given to them, like the Sunni Muslims, a total of 22 seats. The Shi'a challenge ahead is to translate their strength into actual political power.

The roots of confessionalism in Lebanese poltics can be traced back to the 16th century. It was the constitution of 1926 which placed confessionalism on a firm footing. Article 95 of this constitution reads : "As a provisional measure and for the justice and amity, the sects shall be equitably represented in public employment and in the composition of the ministry, provided such measures will not harm the general welfare of the state". Confessionalism was further strenthened in the unwritten National Pact agreed upon by the representatives of the combined Muslim and Christian communities in 1943. Initially, confessionalism served a number of conflict-management functions. But confessional system failed because it was a static solution, depending upon continued acceptance of the validity of the original proportions. Moreover, it institutionalized sectarian structures and perpetuated sectarian identifications. Abolition of confessionalism from Lebanon's political life has always been a major issue. It is through the abolition of this political system that the Muslim community aims to redress the existing distribution of power in the state and the concomitant special privileges which the Maronites have so far enjoyed. Ta'if Accord of 1989 represented the end of efforts to jettison the National Pact of 1943. Indeed, the Ta'if document implicitly ratifies the National Pact with

its emphasis upon confessional compromise and intercommunual cooperation. Because confessionalism is an ideal political formula for Lebanon, a country composed of many religious communities, each with a keen sense of its peculiar historical and social identity and interests.

The Lebanese Civil war is multi-dimentional. The combination of foreign forces and intervention have intensified the conflict. In fact it is primarily the result of domestic and indigenous conditions that have shaped the political cultures and socio-economic formation of the Lebanese conmfessional communities. Three factors were instrumental in leading upto a situation of Civil War. These are (1) The Emergence of Class Divisions in Lebanese Society and the coincidence of this division with the existing religious divisions in the country; (2) The Rigidity of the Political System and finally (3) The presence of a large number of armed Palestinians. Syria was the first which intervened in 1976, the Israelis in 1978 and atgain in 1982, culminating in the intervention of Western Multi National Forces (MNF) as "peacekeeper" led by the United States. The Syrian involvement in the Lebanese Civil War ensure the unity of Lebanon and prevented its partition along religious lines. Syrian involvement also maintained a power-balance between various militias and no single militia could become so powerful as to defeat other one. Moreover, it is due to the support of Syria that Gen. Michel Aoun was defeated and Taif agreement could be implemented which envisaged the moderate distribution of power between Muslims and

Christians. Israel concern with ending the armed Palestinians presence on her northern borders drew her gradually into open involvement in the Lebanese Civil War. But the real objectives of Israel were the establishment of a Maronite dominated state in Lebanon, controlling the Litani River, and annexing southern Lebanon could not be realized. However, Israel carved out a security zone in the southern Lebanon.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis on Religion and Politics in Contemporary Lebanon submitted by Mr. Kaleem Ahmed under my supervision is his original contribution and that it is suitable for submission for the award of the degree of Ph.D.

Futher certified that Mr. Kaleem Ahmed has been engaged in full-time research and that he has put in required attendance as prescribed by the University.

Dated: 30 December 1993

(PROF. MAHMUDUL HAQ)
Supervisor

CONTENTS

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Kaleem Ahmed

(KALEEM AHMED)

INTRODUCTION

Lebanon, on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, is today a small republic stretching one hundred miles along the Phoenician coast, with a total area of 4,015 square miles and a population of more than 3 million. Her territory, mostly rugged mountain, is dominated by the paralle ranges of the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon, and bounded on the north by the Eleutherus river (al-Nahr al-Kabir), on the east by the crest of the Anti-Lebanon, and on the south by a line across the highlands of Galilee. The Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges run north-east to south-west, following the slant of the coast, and between them lies the rift valley of Bekka. West of Bekka, the Lebanon range runs so close to the coastline that in places it falls directly to the sea, its rocky promontories dividing the narrow coastal plain into a number of isolated strips. Beirut, the capital of modern Lebanon, is located in one of the broader coastal strips, almost exactly mid-way down the coast.

In Lebanon, identification by religious groups sects plays the most important role in the political life of an average Lebanese citizen. Individuals participate in public life only through their respective sects which are the major focus of loyalty, self definition and self identification. Since interaction between citizens is effected exclusively through the religious communual web, this influences their social consciousness and political behaviou. They often tend to look at the political affair from the point of their

religious or communal interests. Thus sectarian considerations far outweigh national considerations since each sect has its own world-view and its own interest which more often than not stands in opposition to the interests and world-views of other sects.

There are seventeen recognised religious groups and sects in Lebanon. Some of them are extremely small. Relationship and alliances between the various religious groups have undergone considerable changes over the years, especially since the time of the Emirate. Nevertheless, religious divisions have always remained important. Each is an exclusive, closely integrated socio-political unit, which has been given identity not only by a common set of beliefs but also by the religious tradition of classifying people into groups by their faith. Today, as in the past, the Maronites continue to be the leading sect among the Christians of the country, followed, in traditional importance, by the Greek Orthodox and the Greek Catholics. Among the major non-Christian groups the Lebanese Muslims, divided between the Sunni and Shi'a, dwarf the small but traditionally important community of the Druzes. To appreciate the historical and political peculiarities of the Lebanon, it is important to understand the circumstances in which each of these various sects became established in Lebanon, as well as the manner in which they developed. This thesis focuses on the most important denominational groups, their evolution, growth of sectarian identity and institutions and the interaction between these sects as it

has evolved over a period of time. More emphasis is laid on their impact on the political development in Lebanon.

Confessionalism which guarantees proportional representation to all faiths in all government functions forms the theme of chapter I. The historical roots of confessionalism in Lebanese politics can be traced back to the 16th century. It was the constitution of 1926 which placed confessionalism on a firm footing. Article 95 of this constitution reads : "As a provisional measure and for the justice and amity, the sects shall be equitably represented in public employment and in the composition of the ministry, provided such measures will not harm the general welfare of the state". After independence, the Lebanese leaders decided to retain the constitution of 1926. Confessionalism was further strenthened in the unwritten National Pact agreed upon by the representatives of the combined Muslim and Christian communities in 1943. Thus, confessionalism served a number of 'conflict-management' functions. We have also discussed, in this chapter, the failure of confessional system because it was a static solution, depending upon continued acceptance of the validity of the original proportions. It also institutionalized sectarian structures and perpetuated sectarian indentifications. Abolition of confessionalism from Lebanon's political life has always been a major issue. The demand of Muslims community, now the majority in the country, for the abolition of this political system has also been examined in detail. It is through the abolition of confessionalism that the Muslim community aims

to redress the existing distribution of power in the state and the concomitant special privileges which the Maronites so far enjoyed. However, the TA'if Accord of 1989 represented the end of efforts to jettison the National Pact of 1943. Indeed, the Ta'if document implicitly ratified the National Pact with its emphasis upon confessional compromise and intercommunal cooperation.

Chapter II deals with the origin of the Druze and their development as a political force. They are an offshoot of Isma'ilis (which itself is a splinter of Shiism, a major sect of Islam). The Druze first appeared as a community in Wadi al-Taym in south Lebanon. This religion sprang from the belief in the divinity of the sixth Fatimid Caliph of Egypt, Hakim (996-1020 A.D.) who declared himself to be the last incarnation of the deity. Two of his followers, Hamza and Darazi (after whose name the Druze are known), spread Hakim's doctrine, embellished with Isma'ili philosphy, in southern Lebanon. There the community lived in comparative seclusion, subsisting wholly on agriculture. The Druze once played a politically dominant role in Mount Lebanon, but have been relegated to secondary importance with the rise of Maronite community. The role played by the Junbalati family, particularly Kamal Jumbalat who brought his community to the centre stage of Lebanese politics in 1970s by joining forces with progressive elements in Lebanon is the subject of discussion in this chapter.

Chapter III is about the principal Christian sect, the Maronites. Originally farmers in the Orontes Vally of Syria,

the Maronites take their name from Saint Maron, a legendary fourth century figure. Theologians record the Maronite schism with the Roman Catholic Church as a result of their heretical belief in the monothelite nature of Christ which held that although Christ had two natures he had but a single will. In 680 the Council of Constantinople condemned the doctrine, holding that as there are two natures, there must be two wills, but the human will of Christ conforms in every way to his divine will. Between the seventh and twelfth centuries the Maronites increasingly retreated into the nearby mountains of Lebanon on account of breakdown of law and order in the Orontes valley due to incursion from Muslim and Byzantine invaders bent on punishing the heretics. The Maronite Church abandoned its monothelite doctrine in the twelfth century, moving closers to Rome until it finally and officially entered into communion under Rome in the eighteenth century. The Maronites were, however, allowed to retain their Syriae liturgy and non-celibate clergy.

The Maronite Church was very weak and dependent upon the ruling class, in the beginning. It became independent and powerful as a result of certain socio-economic changes which took place in Mount Lebanon. The Maronite Church and clergy played a very important role in the realization of Christian aspirations for an independent and Greater Lebanon. The Church and religious leaders continued to play important political role even after Lebanon became independent in 1943. Following independence, the Church

became the self-styled guardian of a Christian Lebanon and have remained in the forefront of the struggle over the question of Lebanese identity.

The subject matter of Chapter IV is the sunni community of Lebanon which is basically an urban community. Their role in the Lebanese politics is comparatively a recent development. With the creation of Greater Lebanon, the population of Sunnis increased many times. The sunnis resented the creation of Greater Lebanon and refused to participate in the political process of the country. In this chapter we have discussed as to why the Sunnis resented the creation of Greater Lebanon. The reasons for the subsequent acceptance of Greater Lebanon albeit with reluctance by the Sunnis when the Prime Ministership, the second highest post in the Lebanese republic, was offerred to them has also been examined.

Today Lebanese Sunnis are weak, almost ineffective in militancy and there is no political organization worth its name that appeals to the members of the community wherever they live in the country. Their religious leaders generally do not involve themselves in politics. However, the appeal of traditional leaders has considerably weakened after the Civil War of 1975-76. This chapter also examines the rise and growth of fundamentalist organizations among the Sunnis as well as the attitude and efforts of the community towards reforming the confessional character of the Lebanese polity.

Chapter V gives an account of the political develpment

of the Shi'a sect in Lebanon. The sect came into being as a result of schism that took place in Islam in the decade after the death of Prophet Muhammad on question of his successor (Caliphate). Shi'a sect is one of the oldest Muslim sects, and the overwhelming population of the country belonged to one or other of the Shi'a communities. The vast majority of Shi'a live in the villages and their socio-economic status is poor in comparision to their non-shi'a groups. They have been equally peripheral to the Lebanese political system. The intercommunal National Pact of 1943 was essentially a division of power between the Maronites and Sunni political elite. Their political representation was practically monopolized by six prominent landowning families- the Asads, the Zeins and the Ossirans in southern Lebanon, and the Hamadehs, the Haidars and the Husseinis in Ba'lbek and Bint jubayl. However, the traditional leaders lost much ground in favour of the wealthy returning migrants from oil-producing countries in 1950s and 1960s. The role played by the Imam Musa al-sadr, a spiritual head and charismatic leader of the Shi'a (founder of the Movement of Disinherited and Amal) has also been discussed in detail. In this connection the role of militant groups like Hizbollah and Islamic Amal also forms the subject matter of this chapter.

In the following chapter VI we have discussed the causes of the Civil War of 1975-76. The Lebanese Civil War is multi-dimentional. The combination of foreign forces and intervention have intensified the conflict. In fact it is

primarily the result of domestic and indigenous conditions that have shaped the political cultures and socio-economic formation of the Lebanese confessional communities. Three factors were instrumental in leading upto a situation of Civil War. These are (1) the Emergence of Class Divisions in Lebanese society and the coincidence of this division with the existing religious divisions in the country. (2) The Rigidity of the Poltical system and finally (3) Presence of large number of armed Palestinians.

The role of various outside powers and forces which have intervened overtly or covertly on one side or the other has been discussed. Syria was the first which intervened in 1976, the Israelis in 1978 and again in 1982, culminating in the intervention of Western Multi National Forces (MNF) as "peacekeepers" led by the United States.

There are some useful studies on the development of Lebanese politics, but unfortunately most of these studies consider that the history of the Lebanese nation has been mainly a history of factional conflicts, especially between the Muslims and the Maronites. This gives a distorted understanding of a nation, and ignores the national aspirations of the Lebanese people. This false notion about the Lebanese politics has been perpetuated by the vested interests.

The conventional literature on Lebanon generally adopts this view point overtly or covertly. Kamal S. Salibi's studies (The Modern History of Lebanon, London, 1963. And

Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976, London, 1976), provide us with the basic informations regarding the modern political history of Lebaonon, but he puts undue emphasis on sectarianism in the form of confesssionalism as a decisive factor. Michael C. Hudson's The Precarious Republic : Political Modernization in Lebanon and other writings fall in the same category. Another important writer S. Khalaf has a serious doubt Lebaon's ability to become a viable political community. Another, J.P. Entelis, Pluralism and Party Tansformation in Lebanon: Al-Kata'ib, 1936-1970, emphasises sectarian solution of Lebanon with a view to Maronite preponderance. Among the other recent studies Meir Zamir's The Formation of Modern Lebanon, is not very different from the other studies of this type who adopts almost the same model.

The present study is a modest attempt to present a non-sectarian view of Lebanon while dealing with the relationship between religion and politics in Lebanon.

CHAPTER – I

CONFESSIONALISM: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Generally speaking the mind of the Lebanese elite is conditioned by two considerations: Confessionalism (al-Ta'ifiyah) and absolute individualism. The confessional or sectarian considerations not only shape the thinking of an average Lebanese but also conditions his life and govern his relations with other communities.[1] This observation of an ordinary Lebanese individual is very significant, since confessionalism in Lebanon has been a social fact and has remained the essence of the political system. It is embedded in Article 95 of the constitution[2] which states that "for the reasons of amity and justice" government posts should be equitably distributed between the various

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1. Cf., Labib Zuwiyya-Yamak, 'Party Politics in the Lebanese Political System' in Leonard Binder, (ed.) Politics in Lebanon, New York, 1966 p. 147.

2. The Lebanese constitution provided for a republican regime- the first to be proclaimed in the Arab East in modern times- and a bi-cameral Parliament, to be elected by a two-stage universal manhood suffrage. The Cabinet was to be individually and collectively responsible to Parliament. The President, elected by the two Houses of Parliament in a joint session, was given the right to appoint the Prime Minister and, with a Vote of three-quarters of the Senate, to dissolve the Chamber of Deputies. This elaborate structure for a small state called for a revision in 1927, which increased the powers of the President, especially in expediting financial bills; it abolished the Senate and established a unicammeral Parliament. This constitution, continuing to function during the Mandate period, was suspended when war broke out in 1939. It was restored in 1943, when the independence of the country was formally declared and was purged out the Mandate clauses by an act of parliament on 8 November 1943. The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol. II, London, 1965, p. 661.

communities. The importance of confessionalism is also acknowledged in the electoral law, which stipulates that parliamentary seats be apportioned on the basis of the sectarian division of the population. Since 1943 this has meant that, regardless of the number of deputies, the ratio of Christians to Muslims in the Legislature is six to five, and that the President of the Republic is always a Maronite, the Prime Minister a Sunni, and the Speaker of the House a Shi`a. All attempts to abolish confessionalism from the constitution or even to weaken its hold on the administrative system have so far met with failure despite the generally honest efforts of many leading public minded citizens and leaders. The main reason for the failure of these attempts has been the lack of consensus on a more viable basis for national unity as well as the absence of cohesion among the Lebanese population. As Hitti puts it, "What the country gained in area,"following the proclamation of Greater Lebanon in 1920, "it lost in cohesion. It lost its internal equilibrium.... The Christian overwhelming majority was seriously reduced."[3]

Confessionalism may be defined as a system which guarantees proportional representation to all faiths in all government functions.[4] In confessional system religion is

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3. P.K. Hitti, Lebanon in History, New York, 1957, p. 490.

4. C G Hess and H Bodman, `Confessionalism and Feudality in Lebanese Politics', Middle East Journal , Vol.8, No.1, (Winter, 1954), p. 10.

the driving force behind legislation and the government set up. Confessionalism stands in contrast to a system based on secularism.[5] Secularism is a belief that the state, laws and morals are independent of religion.

The historical roots of confessionalism in Lebanese politics can be traced back to the 16th century. After having conquered Syria and Lebanon from the Mamluks in 1516, the Ottomans set about reorganizing the administrative structure of the conquered territories. It was, in 1590 that they set up an Emirate in the area of Mount Lebanon.[6] Mount Lebanon had throughout its history provided a refuge to persecuted minorities fleeing the wrath of conquering invaders or religious intolerance. Mount Lebanon was in the main the home of two important minority communities, the Maronites who lived in north and the Druze who inhabited in the south.

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5. 'What Secularism Means,' The Middle East No.20, (June, 1976), p. 10.

6. Mount Lebanon, Arabic Jabal Lubnan, French Mont Liban, also called Bal al-Gharbi, mountain range, extending almost the entire length of Lebanon, paralleling the Mediterranean coast for about 150 miles (240 km), with northern outliners extending into Syria. Although the porous limestone of the mountains forms poor, thin soil, it has helped create numerous underground springs that make irrigated cultivation of the lower and middle slops possible. A variety of tree crops (including olives, apricots and apples) are grown on the coastal side. The view presented by the snow-clad peaks may have given Lebanon its name in antiquity; laban is Aramaic for "white". See The New Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol- 7, 15th edition, Chicago, 1987, p. 228.

Following the establishment of the Emirate, Maronites began to move from northern Lebanon to southern Lebanon. Freedom and protection were extended to them by the feudal lords of the area, particularly in matters of personal safety and the exercise of religious activities. The Maronite churches in particular, started to grow and flourish under the auspices of the feudal lords. The monks and their orders cultivated the land of the feudal lords, reclaimed waste lands and purchased land of their own wherever they could. Alongside this development a more fundamental socio-economic change of a unique nature was also taking place in the Emirate. This was the rise and growth of the silk industry.[7] The Christian new comers who were the main silk producers began to buy land for farming and subsequently became peasants.

In the early stages of economic relations between the church and the feudal lords, the interests of the two parties converged. The Church at that point was the weaker and more dependent partner. But as a result of its growing economic strength the Maronite Church began to oppose feudalism in Mount Lebanon with the twin purpose of defending the rights of the peasants perhaps in their own self interest and defeating their political rivals, the feudal lords. To achieve this purpose the Maronite Church sided with Shihabi Emir Bashir II (1788-1840) in his fight

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7. Ibid., p. 3.

against the Druze families (Junablat, the Imads, and Abu-Nakads).[8] In addition to this, the invasion and occupation of Lebanon by Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt from 1831 to 1840 gave the inter sectarian differences a country-wide character. The Maronites welcomed the occupation and sided with Ibrahim against Druze uprising. When the occupation became oppressive the Maronites sided with the Druze but the amity was short-lived. Finally in 1840 British, Austrian and Turkish troops, aided by the disaffected mountaineers succeeded in driving Ibrahim from Lebanon.[9]

Bashir Qasim was installed as the Governor General of Lebanon by the Ottomans largely at French insistence.[10] This further alienated the Druze who had already suffered much under Shihabi rule. Through Bashir Qasim they tried to institutionalize the sectarian differences that had emerged to date. A diwan (provincial council) consisting of twelve men, two from each of the major religious sects was established.[11] This measure did not satisfy the Druze. Unable to remove Bashir Qasim by peaceful and legal means, the Druze in 1841, turned to insurrection, which soon led to civil war and massacre of Christians in areas with mixed

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8. Malcom H Kerr, Lebanon in the Last Years of Feudalism, 1840-1868, Beirut, 1959, p. 1.

9. Hess and Bodman, op-cit., p. 12.

10. Leila M.T. Meo, Lebanon: Improbable Nation, Bloomington, 1965, p. 19.

11. Ibid., p. 18.

population.[12] Again the Five European powers, France, Britain, Russia, Prussia and Austria- Hungary intervened which led to the abolition of Emirate. Instead a new system of government came into existence.

The Ottoman authorities divided the Emirate into two districts or qa`im-maqamiyah, one Druze and the other Maronite, governed by a district ruler (qaim-maqam) who was appointed and could be removed by the Pasha of Sidon, the Sultan's direct representative in the coastal levant.[13] This solution also failed. This new system in fact had neglected the fact that neither of the two qa`im maqamiyah was homogeneous in a religious sense; there were mixed Druze- Maronite villages within each district whose affairs were still without any form of regulation.[14]

Between 1842 and 1845 the Porte and the Great Powers fashioned a series of fundamental laws for the Lebanon which attempted to solve this problem.[15] In the Druze province of the south, where the nobility was predominantly Druze and the peasantry predominantly Maronite, steps were taken allegedly to safeguard the interests of both. In each of the mixed villages the Christian inhabitants could choose a

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12. Ibid., p. 20.
13. Hess and Bodman, Op. cit., p. 12.
14. Ibid., p. 12.
15. Ibid., p. 13.

Christian wakil or agent to look after their interests. He would be responsible not to the Druze governor, but to the Turkish governor in Sidon. The Druze population in the mixed districts also had their wakils, and both Druze and Christian wakils exercised judicial authority over their coreligionists and collected taxes from them on behalf of the district feudal lords. Both functions traditionally belonged to the feudal lords who now found their powers sharply curtailed by the intrusion of elected wakils. This gave rise to disturbances in both governorates and a serious outbreak of fighting between Maronites and Druzes took place in 1845 which elicited a formal protest from the Concert of Europe.[16]

In response to the protest of the Concert of Europe Shakib Effendi, the Foreign Minister of Sublime Porte was sent to Lebanon, who worked out a plan. Reglement Shakib Effendi as the plan was called, endowed each governorate with a majlis or council composed of twelve members. It included the qa'im maqam, a judge and a councillor from each of the Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Druze, and Sunni sects, and a Shi`a councillor. The Sunni judge also represented the Shi`a.[17] This plan again failed to satisfy both the religious communities in the mixed villages. A strong egalitarian movement, led initially by the Maronite clergy and aimed at a de facto overthrow of feudalism, had

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16. Leila M.T. Meo, op-cit., p. 22.

17. Ibid., p. 23.

arisen in the predominantly Maronite area of Kisrwan. This movement soon made itself felt in the villages where Maronite lived under Druze lords. At one point, the Maronite clergy ordered its followers to refuse to have any dealing with their Druze land-lords and even to withhold payments of rent. For the most part, the Druze peasants, linked by strong religious ties to their leaders, remained loyal to them.[18] Added to these religious and political factors was the continuing efforts of the Porte to discredit the solution of the Lebanese question which had been dictated by the Great Powers. It appears that the representatives of the Porte continually incited the Druze population to violence. The massacres of 1859-60 ensued and the Druze, though now numbering a little over one third of the Maronites succeeded in overwhelming their opponents.[19] Between 15000-30000 Christians died in the conflict and many more became homeless.

The death toll shocked both Druze and Maronite leaders and at the prodding of the Sublime Porte, they were ready to

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18. The Druze 'uqqal (religious leaders of Druze), acting on behalf of the landlords, warned the Druze peasants of the imminence of a Christian danger, counselled them to avoid sedition, and urged them under no condition to renounce their solidarity with their chieftains. Kamal S.Salibi,The Modern History of Lebanon,London,1965,p.87.

19. Hess and Bodman, op. cit., p. 13. For detail about the Maronite peasants revolt and subsquent Massacre see Scheltema, F.J, The Lebanon in Turmoil, Syria and the Powers in 1860, New Haven, 1920 and also, Kamal S. Salibi, op.cit., 1965, pp. 80-105.

make total submission to Turkish authority.[20] But European powers once again intervened.Thus, the representatives of the five European powers met with the representatives of the Ottoman empire and on 9 June 1861 signed the organic statute which called for the unification of Mount Lebanon and the creation of semi-autonomous governership (Mutasarrafiya). The governor (mutasarrif) was to be a non-Lebanese Christian, designated by the Ottoman Sultan with the consent of the European powers. He was to report directly to the Sultan and was aided by an administrative council. The twelve members constituting this council were to be chosen from Mount Lebanon by the heads of each religious community. Originally each community had two representatives in the council but in 1864 amending statute distributed council seats on the basis of the size of each sect roughly determined. Thus, four Maronites, three Druze, two Greek Orthodox, one Greek Catholic, one Sunni and one Shi`a made up the mutasarrafiya's advisory council. [21]

The governorate was subdivided into seven districts in 1864, previously six, by subdividing Kisrwan into Kisrwan proper and the district of Batroun. Each was administered by a qa'im maqam chosen from among the largest religious group. And each qa'im maqam was assisted by a regional administrative council, composed of three to six members

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20. Leila M.T. Meo, op-cit., p. 23.

21. Kamal S. Salibi, The History of Modern Lebanon, New York, 1965, pp. 71-72.

representing the different elements of the population in the district. The districts were in turn subdivided into nahies or cantons, and each was administered by moudir (director). Each village in canton was administered by a Shaykh, named by the Governor General upon the recommendation of the villagers.[22] The statute of 1861 and 1864 succeeded in putting an end to the widespread confessional unrest in the Mount Lebanon. Only slight changes were made in the statute between 1864 and the outbreak of world war I.[23]

Confessionalism during the French Mandate:

Following the imposition of the Mandate [24] over Syria and Lebanon in 1920, France started to constitute various political institutions on confessional basis. The establishment of Greater Lebanon on 1 September 1920 by General Gouraud, with the inclusion of the fertile Bekka plain and the regions around the coastal cities of Sidon, Tyre, Tripoli and Beirut further complicated the

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22. Leila M.T. Meo, op.cit., pp. 34-35.

23. Hess and Bodman, op.cit., p. 14.

24. The trusteeship arrangements under the auspices of the League of Nations which enabled Britain and France at the end of World War I to legitimize their occupation of several Middle Eastern countries. The territories of Syria and Lebanon fell under the French Mandate. For detail see S.H. Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon under French Mandate, London, 1958, Walid Khalidi, Conflict and Voilence in Lebanon: Confrontation in the Middle East, Cambridge, 1983, p.159, and P L Gabriel , In the Ashes: A Story of Lebanon, Whitmore Publishing Compy: Ardmore, 1978, pp. 43-45.

confessional situation. The area of the annexed territories was nearly double that of Mount Lebanon. The establishment of Greater Lebanon brought about a great demographic changes. The population of Sunni sect was multiplied approximately eight times and Shi`a strength was virtually quadrupled, while the Maronite population was increased by only one third. Consequently, the Lebanese Christians now slightly out numbered the Muslims. Furthermore, the Druze lost their former position as the dominant Muslim sect to the Sunnis, who now emerged as the main challengers to the Maronites' numerical preponderance and political predominance.[25] Whereas in the mutasarrafiya the Maronites had formed an overwhelming majority (59 percent of the total population) in Greater Lebanon they became the largest single community (29 percent of the total population).[26]

In 1920 the advisory council was revived. The advisory council was composed of seventeen members who were selected to represent their respective religious sects. In 1922, the advisory council was replaced by an elected representative council, and in the new council too the seats were distributed along sectarian lines. It had thirty members of whom ten were Maronites, six Sunni, five Shi`a, two Druze, two Greek Catholic, four Greek Orthodox and one for the remaining minorities.[27]

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25. Leila M T Meo, op. cit., p. 47.

26. John P. Entelis, Pluralism and Party Transformation in Lebanon : Al-Kata'ib, 1936-1970, Leiden, 1974, pp.29-30

27. Ibid., p. 15.

On 24 May 1926 the Lebanese Constitution came into operation as mentioned earlier, according to Article 95 (Still in force today) of this constitution which reads: "As a provisional measure and for the sake of justice and amity, the sects shall be equitably represented in public employment and in the composition of the ministry, provided such measures will not harm the general welfare of the state."[28] A bicameral legislature was set up on the basis of proportional sectarian representation and the entire administration reorganized so as to conform to the provisions of Article 95. The French also started encouraging the practice of reserving the powerful presidency and the army command for Maronites.[29] In 1932, the French mandatory authorities conducted a census on the insistence of Mohammad al-Jisr,[30] who staked his claim to the presidency. It showed an almost completely even distribution of Christians and Muslims among the resident population, but in order to convince al-Jisr that Christians were still a majority added "resident abroad." The Sunnis

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28. F.M.A. Arab World File, 3 December 1980 No. 1756.

29. Jawaid Iqbal, Origin and Dimentions of the Civil War: 1975-76, Unpublished M. Phil Dissertation, J.N.U., New-Delhi, 1984, p. 16.

30. Muhammad al-Jisr a prominent Sunni man of learning from Tripoli advocated complete politcal independence of Lebanon from Syria. Despite the almost total Sunni boycott of the constitutional consultations, Muhammad al-Jisr, did take part in drafting the constitution. He had also defied the Sunni boycott of the Lebanese state as early as 1926 by agreeing to serve until 1932 as speaker of parliament.

then staked their claim to the premiership and in 1937 the first Sunni Premier was selected.[31] Since then, this practice of allocating the presidency and premiership to the Maronites and Sunni Muslims respectively, has continued till this day.

CONFESSIONALISM AFTER INDEPENDENCE:

Lebanon became independent in 1943. The leaders of independent Lebanon decided to retain the constitution of 1926. The confessional system was further strengthened in an unwritten National Pact agreed upon by the representatives of the combined Muslim and Christian communities in 1943. This covenant consist of correspondence between the leading Sunni and Maronite politicians of the day, Riad al-Sulh and Bishara al-Khuri. It was agreed upon that the President of the Republic was to be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies a Shi`a Muslim, the deputy speaker a Greek Orthodox, the defence minister a Druze, and the Commander of the military a Maronite Christian. Furthermore, seats in the Chamber of Deputies were divided among Christians and Muslims in a 6 to 5 ratio based on the official census of 1932.[32] It also stipulated that neither community should ally itself with the external

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31. S.P. David and S.C. Audrey , The Politics of Pluralism: A Comparative Study of Lebanon and Ghana , New York, 1975, p. 42.

32. Leila. M.T. Meo, op.cit., pp.82-83.

forces, meaning that the Christians should not seek to restore European protection and the Muslims should give up their goal of reattaching the Muslim parts of the Greater Lebanon back to Syria.

The principle of fixed proportional sectarian representation applied not only to the highest offices but also was extended throughout the political system. Posts in the civil service, the judiciary, the military, and seats in the parliament itself were allocated according to the sectarian distributions reported in the 1932 census. On that basis, the ninety-nine-member Chamber of Deputies allocated fifty-four seats to Christians of all denomination and forty-five to non-Christians (Mulims broadly divided into Shi`a and Sunni and Druze). Since neither the Christian nor non-Christian sides were doctrinally homogeneous, each major sect was also jealous of its proper representation.[33]

Allocation of seats in the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies According to Religious Sects.

Christians (54)		Non-Christians (45)	
Maronites	20	Sunni Muslims	20
Greek Orthodox	11	Shi`a Muslims	19
Greek Catholic	6	Druze	6
Armenian Orthodox	4		
Minorities	3		

Source: Michael C. Hudson, The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon, New York, 1968, p.23.

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33. Michael C. Hudson. Arab Politics: The search for Legitimacy, London, 1977, p. 286.

Positions within the state bureaucracy were allocated along similar lines, with sect taking priority over merit as a criterion of employment from the highest to the lowest levels.[34] After 1958, government appointments to administrative positions were to be on the basis of parity, 6 to 6. In fact, Maronites and Sunnis have been represented , proportionally, on the top levels of administration, in greater numbers than have members of the other sects. In 1955, for example, with 30 percent of the population, and holding 30 per cent of the seats in Parliament, the Maronites held 40 per cent of the top positions; the Sunnis with 20 per cent of the population and 20.45 percent of the membership in Parliament, held 27 percent of the top administrative positions.[35] However, the most sensitive and influential of the high posts, in addition to that of the president himself, notably in the armed forces, were also reserved for Christians.[36]

Confessionalism served a number of conflict-management functions which have been proposed by Eric Nordlinger as vital for deeply divided societies. It facilitated what he calls "purposive depoliticization." Nordlinger argues that a potentially uncontrollable issue is removed from the day-to-day political arena. It accomplished this end by

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34. Ibid., p. 286.

35. Michael Suleiman, Political Parties in Lebanon' New York, 1967, p. 49.

36. Michael C. Hudson, op.cit., 1977, pp. 286-287.

ensuring to all the sects that the normal competition for power and influence would not lead to unacceptable domination by any one of them. This mutual security condition was implemented through the fixed proportionally mechanism that pertained to all structures in the system and through the implicit mutual veto which any major sect could resort to in extreme crisis. It encouraged leaders of the various sects to compromise in order to maintain the stability which confers prosperity and various other political "goods" on all the sects. The structure of confessionalism also promoted, for better or worse, another of Nordlinger's conditions, the maintenance of a stable coalition. In the Lebanese case, however, the confessionalist electoral laws by and large favoured the traditional leaders, whose family status, wealth, and claims to sectrian leadership made them indispensable for the building of a winning list. Candidates who worked against or outside the system found that they lacked the patronage, the influence (wasitas) to compete with the cross-sectarian elite. No political party, regardless of ideology, was able to challenge this establishment. Even the biggest and best organized, the right-wing Kata'ib (or Phalanges), could win only nine seats in the ninety-nine-man Chamber in 1968, and seven in 1972, and this party itself was rooted in the Maronite community. In fact, the one significant party most clearly oppossed to confessionalism, the progressive Socialist party, derived substantial influence from the

Druze community and its leader, Kamal Junablat, whose ideology notwithstanding- was very much a traditional Za`im.[37]

The principal actors in the Lebanese liberal republic, therefore, were notable, each with a parochial, particularist constituency. Their support bases were relatively secure by virtue of the primordial character of allegience and the socioeconomic leverage they could exert over their clienteles. Consequently, the Lebanese political process consisted mainly of the competition within the elite for relative prestige and material advantage.[38]

The Sunni-Maronite partnership in the formulation of the Covenant gave rise to a situation in which the leaders of the two community at the highest level and with few exceptions looked upon the entire Lebanese scence through a bisectarian prism. This prism tended by the same token to be exclusivist and somehow able to block from view the existence of other sects, Christian and Muslim alike. It took the stunnigly charismatic personality of Imam Musa al-Sadr to bring the existence of the Shi`a community to the attention of the Sunni- Maronite oligarchy just as it was the no less extraordinary personality of the older Kamal Junablat that brought the existence of the Druze community

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37. Ibid., p. 287.

38. Ibid., pp. 287-288.

of their attention too.[39]

The bisectarian prism tended not only to relegate to irrelevance the concerns and interests of the other sects, but also to cause the Sunni and Maronite leaders at the highest levels to be obsessively involved with one another. The fact that every senior Sunni politician aspired to the premiership, while every senior Maronite politician aspired to the presidency, fueled this reciprocal obsession. The Maronite president, with a guaranteed six-year term, had the option of forcing the resignation of any Sunni incumbent prime minister and replacing him with his rival. The propensity of Sunni aspirants to queue up for the premiership under cut the more stalwart Sunni leaders. The Sunni politicians could and did retaliate by dipping into the standing queue of Maronite presidential aspirants to groom a future partner in office.[40]

To some extent, all this was robust politics. Nevertheless, the stronger the attempt by the president to create a large pool of Sunni aspirants, the deeper the rift between him and key Sunni oligarchs became and the greater the erosion of the credibility of the Sunni representatives at the centre of power. Given the symbolic role of the Sunni partner in the Covenant, this bisectarian twist of the system only contributed to the alienation of the Muslim

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39. Walid Khalidi,`Lebanon: Yesterday and Tomorrow,' Middle East Journal, Vol.43, No. 3, (Summer, 1989), p. 380.

40. Ibid., p. 380.

sects from the system, from the Maronite, and from one another. It also further reduced their inhibitions to seek recourse outside the system and the country.[41]

Even when relations between the president and the senior prime minster were initially cordial, the logic of the situation asserted itself sooner rather than later. It did so the more readily because of a corollary phenomenon: good administraion and decision-making demanded that there be a clear hierarchy between president and prime minster, but again the symbolic nature of the premiership required, or was perceived by the Sunni incumbent to require, that he act as an equal in a historic partnership.[42]

The frustration that this generated on both sides led either to the appointment of pliant prime ministers only too happy to wear their titles or to a deadlock between president and strong prime ministers. Such a deadlock prevented the kind of stable working relationship between the two leaders of the country that was needed to sustain a serious reform programme. The last opportunity for such a relationship to underpin serious reform was perhaps lost during the Shihab administration, thus dooming the Covenant system to collapse.[43]

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41. Ibid., p. 381.

42. Ibid., p. 381.

43. Ibid., p. 381.

CRITIQUE OF CONFESSIONALISM:

Some Lebanese intellectuals like the sociologists Halim Barakat and Samih Farsoun have strongly criticised the confessionalist "solution," which they see as not a real solution at all. Like many strong medicines, confessionalism had some negative side effects. It was a peculiarly static solution, depending upon continued acceptance of the validity of the origional proportions. Although in an important way it neutralized sectarian competition, it also institutionalized sectarian structures and perpetuated sectarian identifications. The requirement of proportionality introduced additional administrative inefficiency, compared to a system of appointment by merit. Nor did the system appear to be responsive or structurally flexible in the face of modernization and its attendant governmental problems, the spread of new radical ideologies and the growth of new organizations and counter elites.[44] In short, the confessional solution worked well when there was not very much for government to do.

Another important scholar of Lebanese factional politics Michael.C. Hudson further elaborates the shortcomings of confessionalism in the Lebanese situation. According to him the Lebanese elite attempted to bridge the gap between its essentially traditional legitimacy bases and

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44. Halim Barakat, `Social and Political Integration in Lebanon: A case of Social Mosaic,' Middle East Jouranl, Vol-27, No.3, (Summer, 1978), pp.301-318, and Samih Farsoun, `Students Protsts and the coming crisis in Lebanon,'MERIP Reports, No.19, (August, 1973), pp.3-14.

the modern demands of nationalism and modernism through its efficacy in achieving minimal goals. But one of the effects of rapid modernization is an expansion of popular expectations about government performance. Based as it was on particularist and parochial values, the system increasingly came under attack as the demands of the younger and the disadvantaged sectors for a modern state, for more democracy, for more social justice, and for more responsible fulfilment of Lebanon's responsibilities to the Arab world also increased. Modernization has brought unexampled aggregate prosperity, but it has also added a number of new complications to the system's legitimacy formula.[45] Michael Wall in his article in The Economist has observed that the demographic growth since 1932 has led most knowlegeable observers to conclude that non-Christians out number Christians because of suspected higher, Muslim birth rates and higher Christian emigration; furthermore, the large resident populations of mostly Muslim labourers from Syria and refugees from Palestine were thought to number perhaps 800,000 compared to the 2 million or more resident Lebanese.[46] These people were not citizens, but they exerted political influence, particularly the Palestinians, whose national revival in the middle 1960s, created the most

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45. Michael C. Hudson, The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon, New York, 1968, Chaper.3.

46. Michael Wall, `The Tightrope Country: A Survey of Lebanon,' The Economist, January 26, 1974, as cited Michael. C. Hudson Arab Politics: The search For Legitimacy, London, 1977 p.288.

serious strains on internal political and national security.

Another potentially disruptive aspect of the demographic challenge was that the Muslim Shi`a community, according to some observers, may now have surpassed both the Maronites and the Sunnis as the largest single sect.[47] The National Pact had been drawn up by a Sunni and a Maronite and served basically as an entente between these communities, and to some extent it divided Lebanon into two spheres of influence. By contrast, the Shi`a were the poorest and most deprived of all the main sects: their region in the hill country of the south and in parts of the Bekka was the least developed in the country. Until the last few years it ws largely ignored by the government, except for some "pork barrel" projects which the local Shi`a Za`ims extracted to distribute as patronage. Shi`a began migrating in large numbers into the Beirut areas, driven out in part by Israeli reprisal attacks on Palestinians guerrilla bases and refugee camps in the south. Their increasingly serious plight and their claim under the principle of proportionality to a far bigger share of power gave the Shi`as a sense of sectarian identity and activism hitherto absent. A dynamic imam, Musa al-Sadr, challenged one of the traditional establishment leaders and proved to have strong popularity and influence, showing the characteristic independence from worldly governmental authority that Shi`a have historically displayed.

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47. Ibid., p. 14.

The Lebanese system was not entirely unresponsive to pressures for changing the proportionality formula. An important outcome of the 1958 civil war was a move to upgrade the non-Christian quota of high civil service commission to full equality. The influence of the Sunni and Druze communities as strenthened by the creation of community councils under Lebanese law in 1955 and 1962, respectively, and in 1969 a Higher Council was establisned to ensure that growing Shi`a demands would be articulated within the system. At the highest level, however, the Maronites maintained their occupancy of the presidency- by tradition, not the constitution- and retained the key military, security, and foreign policy posts. The deepening troubles of the early 1970s brought increasing demands, largely on the part of the left, for an end to confessionalism entirely, or failing that, the election of a non-Maronite president and the upgrading of the power of the Sunni and Shi`a top offices.[48]

Another challange of modernization as against Lebanon's legitimacy formula was growing class- conciousness and unrest. Outside Mount Lebanon, where there was a tradition of small landholders and independent farmers, the tenant farmers and day labourers were being increasignly squeezed by an archaic quasi-feudal order and agricultural mechanization, this pushed off the land accounts in part for

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48. Michael C. Hudson, op.cit., 1977, p. 289.

the heavy migration to Beirut. Many of those who remained were largely integrated into the system, as indicated by very high voter turnouts in the electoral contest between traditional rural bosses. But in recent years a sizeable protest vote for non-establishment candidates has developed; Communists and radical socialist-nationalist parties have found support from this constituency. The industrial proletariat and the urban unemployed constituted another sector which has traditionally mustered only marginal influence. Included here were large numbers of Syrian, Kurdish, and Palestinian labourers who were formally execluded from the political system. The labour movement, while stronger and older in Lebanon then in most Arab countries, still had not developed substantial independence, although a federation of Communist-supported unions did exist. Like their rural counterparts, much of the urban labour force appeared to have been integrated into the traditional system of local notables who dispense jobs, security, and other assistance. A landmark social security bill passed during the regime of General Fu'ad Shihab (1958-64) had began to alleviate some of the problems of some of the labourers. But there was also labour unrest, and in the middle 1960s the coalition of left-wing groups under the nominal leadership of Junablat was able to mobilize substantial labour support. Up to the eve of the civil war, observers continued to doubt whether the state's administrative and political structures were sufficient to

handle the growing demands of the urban masses.[49]

The student population of Lebanon, always politically active, also became a volatile force on the local political scene in the early 1970s lending its weight generally to the progressive movements. A major intellectual centre of the entire area, quantitatively as well as qualitatively, Lebanon found its traditional legitimacy constantly under bitter attack from student groups in universities and increasingly in the high schools. Here the radical critique of the Lebanese system as oligarchic, repressive, irresponsible, and deliquent in its obligations to "the people" and "the Arab nation" was forcibly articulated. Thus, from many quarters, the confessional structure, that is, the elitist-pluralist legitimacy formula of Lebanon came under attack.[50]

As the ruinous Civil War of 1975-76 unfolded, it was poignant to recall how close Lebanon's politicians had come towards serious reforms more than three decade earlier. The Late General Shihab, the army commander who had resolved the 1958 crisis, recognized explicitly the need for political and administrative modernization. During his regime (1958-64), important achievements were made in the fields of social security, civil service reform, agricultural development, and planning. Among his staunchest supporters

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49. Ibid., p. 290.

50. Ibid., p. 290.

Kamal Junbalat's Progressive Socialist party, which was the system's only tenuous link with the growing non-establishment left, and the Kata'ib party (Phalanges) of Pierre Gemayel, the best organized group representing the Maronite community. At that time, as John Entelis has shown, an important part of the Kata'ib leadership was committed to modernizing the Lebanese state in hopes of forestalling further social problems, which would in time threaten Lebanon's national cohesion. Modernization of the state was something which inmportant components of conservative Maronite and progressive non-Maronite opinion could agree about, even though their respective national identity orientations remained fundamentally different; and for a time Shihab was able to exploit this parallelism. It constituted the system's only hope, albeit a slim one, for escaping further turmoil. But Shihab was unable to effect lasting changes in the system, which, because of its immobilizing proportionalism and its contrived traditional elitism, proved to be immune to reform by evolutionary means.[51]

Abolition of confessionalism from Lebanon's political framework is a major issue. Most Lebanese leaders, at least outwardly, deplore the contemporary confessional nature of the state. And it is through the abolition of this political system that the Muslim community, now the

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51. Ibid., pp. 290-291.

majority in the country, aims to redress the existing distribution of power in the state and the concomitant special privileges which the Maronites have enjoyed. All Mulism leaders and parties broadly agree on the desirability of abolishing political confessionalism at all levels, including that affecting political and administrative appointments and parliamentary representation. This had led to consistant demands for reform of the electoral law, which provides for parliamentary elections to be held on a sectarian basis and regulates voting acordingly, and for change in Article 95 of the constitution, which provides a confessional basis for public appointments. Abolishing of only the political aspects of confessionalism would to a great extent meet the demands of Muslims for their personal and family affairs to be governed by religious rather than civil law.[52] Ever since its formation in 1969, the National Movement, under the leadership of Kamal Junbalat, had also pressed and agitated in favour of a radical reform of the Lebanese political system. It had also called for amendments to the Lebanese Constitution and changes in the Electroal Law, which would secure the abolition of the principle of sectarian representation in public office, and in parliament, in favour of what it called "social" or "popular" representation.[53] However, it should be noted

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52. Hussein Sirriyeh ,`Lebaonon : Dimensions of Conflict,' Adelphi Papers , 243, (Autumn, 1989), p. 16.

53. Kamal S. Salibi, Cross Roads to Civil War : Lebanon 1958-1976, London, 1976.

that, within the Muslim community, the LNM (especially when led by the late Kamal Junbalat, assassinated on 16th March, 1977) has wanted a greater degree of secularization thant the traditional leadership.[54]

Some Christians say that they favour a secular state, but point out that if competence were the sole criterion for appointments to administrative positions, they, because of their greater education, would hold more positions than they do now. Christians will argue that Lebanese Muslims for religious and sectarian reasons would never accept to have matters of 'personal status' involving marriage and inheritance placed under secular state control, a prerequisite for genuine secularizatin.[55] At other times they argued that sectarianism needed to be 'eradicated from the hearts' before being removed from the Constitution and the law. Despite this latter attitude, Maronites have moved away from promoting harmonious confessionalism (as advocated in Suleiman Franjieh's Constitutional Document of 14 February 1976) and now tend to call for the abolition of sectarianism as such. The Cabinet of National Unity's programme of 31 May 1984 envisaged a 'final' abolition of sectarianism, and the Tripartite Agreement of 28 December 1985- concluded, under Syrian patronage, between the leaders of the (Maronite) Lebanese Force, the (Shi'a) Amal movement

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54. Hussein Sirriyeh , op.cit., p. 16.

55. David C. Gordon, Lebanon: The Fragmented Nation, London, 1980, p. 105.

and the (Druze) Progressive Socialist Party- called for the complete abolition of confessionalism within less than ten years. There was Maronite participation in both endeavours. Moreover, President Gemayel's March 1988 proposals suggested setting a specified period for drawing up plans to eliminate political sectarianism; however, the proposals as a whole, especially with regard to power- sharing, were rejected by Muslim leaders. While there may be a Christian trend towards accepting the abolition of sectarianism, the Maronite leader Elie Hobeiqa, who signed the Tripartite Agreement, was nonetheless ousted by extremist elements who disapproved, this move.[56]

The Document of National Understanding which emerged from the Ta'if negotiations hardly represented a radical departure from previous attempts to reform the Lebanese political system. Many of its features were anticipated by the Constitutional Document accepted by then- president Franjiyah in 1976 and the Tripartite Agreement of 1985, both of which were mediated by Syria. The accord, approved at Ta'if by 58 of the 62 deputies, represented the end of efforts to jettison the National Pact of 1943. Indeed, the Ta'if document implicitly ratifies the National Pact with its emphasis upon confessional compromise and intercommunal cooperation. Deconfessionalization is stated as an explicit goal in the agreement, but without a specified deadline or

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56. Hussein Sirriyeh, op.cit., pp. 16-17.

timetable. The accord effectively concedes the futility of any serious attempt to expunge political sectarianism in Lebanon, at leat for the foreseeable future. (It bears recalling that the unwritten pact of 1943 also was not intended to institutionalize political sectarianism). The accord leaves no doubt that, rhetorics aside, confessionalism is here to stay for some time to come. In all fairness, however, most of the deputies who participated in the negotiations emphasized that they saw the accord as part of a process, not a definitive settlement.[57]

There is a discernible fact contained in the negotiations and its outcome that the parties wanted to temporize the delegitimization of confessionalism. There was a lurking apprehension that getting rid of confessionalism all of a sudden would shock the communal fragile equilibrium of Lebanese society and would cause further disintegration of it. Moreover, the Christian call for the removal of `sectarianism' from the `hearts' has some validity, even if it was made disingenuously. The confessional institutions have in themseleves emerged out of Lebanon's already sectarianized political culture, and it is in deep-seated norms, values and attitudes that one has to look for change. Institutional change could partially mould

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57. Augustus Richard Norton, `Lebanon after Ta`if : Is the Civil War Over?' Middle East Jouranl, Vol. 45, No.3 (Summer 1991) p. 461.

cultural values, through a long process of political socialization, but whether leaders might be found who could stand above confessional affiliations and run such institutions remains to be seen. [58]

Although, there is a profound difference in perception, confessionalism served the infant Lebanese state very well. It provided the basis for reconciliation of the largely autonomous sects while it legitimized, but limited, competition and rivalry.

However, in early 1970's this system failed in part because it did not recognise that Muslims in Lebanon had become more numerous than Christians as a result of Christian migratin to the west and the higher fertility rate of the Muslims, especially Shi`a. On the basis of the most reasonable assumptions regarding rates of growth between 1932-71, at the outbreak of the Lebanese conflict in 1975, the Christian community formed less than 43 percent of the total population, while Muslim community has risen to over 57 percent. The Shi`a who had constituted 20 percent of the total population in 1932 and ranked third behind the Maronites and the Sunnis now constituted 28 percent of tne total population and is the largest single group in the country.[59] Thus, the leftist groups started movement for

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58. Hussein Sirriyeh, op.cit., p.17.

59. Riad B. Tabbarah,`Background to the Lebanese Conflict,' International Journal of Comparative Sociology, Vol.20, No. 1-2 (March-June, 1979), p.117.

the deletion of all confessional clauses from the *Constitution and the National Pact of 1943.*

Fed up of prolonged civil war, the 58 Deputies of Lebanese Chamber assembled in Ta'if on 22 October 1989 to introduce some reforms in the Lebanese political system. They reached an agreement according to which Muslims and Christains will have equal representation in the Parliament. The executive powers of the President were transferred to the Cabinet, consisting of equal number of Muslims and Christians. However, the existing confessional distribution of the principal offices of state was to remain unchanged. This meant that the President would remain a Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim and the Speaker of Parliament a Shi`a Muslim.[60]

Nontheless Confessional system failed in part because it is not entirely home-grown product. From its earliest manifestations upto independence it was helped and encouraged by foreign nations. It did not evolve out of consensus among the Christians and Muslims. Rather it was imposed upon Lebanon to serve the imperial interests of the French during the period of the mandate. Although the National Pact of 1943 adopted confessional system but instead of regulating conflict and promoting inter-sectarian cooperation it only helped in aggravating sectarian discord which ultimately plunged the country into civil war in 1975.

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60. Strategic Survey 1989-90, pp. 99-100.

Besides, this system failed because it did not recognise that Muslims in Lebanon had outnumbered the Christians as a result of latter's migration to the west and the higher fertility rate of the Muslims. But Christians were not ready to give up their political hegemony.

Although, Confessionalism is being criticised, yet, it is an ideal political formula for Lebanon, a country composed of many religious communities, each with a keen sense of its peculiar historical and social identity and interests. That sectarian loyalties in Lebanon are strong beyong dispute, and it is hardly imaginable that a political system which did not take these loyalties into consideration could be successfully established in the country within the framework of democracy.

CHAPTER – II

THE DRUZE COMMUNITY

ORIGINS:

Although the Druze constitute no more than 7 percent of the population of Lebanon, they have always played a prominent role in Lebanese history and contemporary politics, a role that has exceeded the community's numerical significance.[1] When the Druze settled in the Lebanon mountains there were no Maronites. The latter moved there in stages after being persecuted by the Mamlukes. Historians say that the Druze at first saw the Maronites as a persecuted minority like themselves and welcomed them.[2] The Druze ruled Mount Lebanon jointly with the Maronites prior to the creation of Modern Lebanon. The community has preserved its cultural separateness by being closely knit socially. In 1031, the Druze community was closed to outsiders[3] and the teachings of Druzism have always remained a secret, sometimes not revealed to its own members.

The sect originated in Egypt in the beginning of the eleventh century during the reign of the sixth Fatimid Caliph, al Hakim (996-1021). The Fatimids (909-1171) claimed descent from Fatimah and belonged to the Isma`ili branch of the Shi`a, the branch that emphasized the imamate

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1. Michael C. Hudson, The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon, Washington D.C. 1985, p. 32.

2. David Butter, `Are the mountain warriors losing out?' The Middle East, (June, 1982), p. 20.

3. Michael C. Hudson, op. cit., p. 32.

of Ismail (d 760), seventh successor of Caliph Ali. The ultra Shi'a went as far as exalting Ali and his successors above prophet Muhammad- the imamate above prophecy-, whence the leap to endowing the imam with divine attributes becames rather easy. The step bridged the gap between finite humanity and infinite divinity. Al-Hakim took that final step (1016-17) and found al-Darazi a ready and convincing spokesman.[4]

Druze carried to an extreme the Isma'ili doctrine according to which each of the attributes, or component principles, of God was made manifest to mankind in the personality of a Prophet or imam. The eleventh-century leader, Darazi, proclaimed that the Fatimid Caliphs Hakim (996-1021), was the manifestation of God in his unity. His followers, known as Druze, address prayers to Hakim and him 'Our Lord', as well as looking forward to his reappearance. This is generally considered to make them non-Muslims, since the cardinal sin in Islam is to attribute any kind of plurality to God or to place any person or thing on a level with Him. The Druze do, however, observe some Muslim

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4. P.K. Hitti, A Short History of Lebanon, New York, 1965, pp. 96-97.

festivals and some recognizable Islamic Laws.[5]

According to the Isma'ili Shi'a faith then officially received in Egypt, al-Hakim, as imam , was the divinely appointed and authoritative guardian of Islam, holding a position among men which answered to that of the cosmic principle al-'aql al-fa'al, the active intellect, and unquestionable head of the Isma'ili religious hierarchy. Al-Hakim proved an eccentric ruler both in his personal life and in his religious policy, which flouted alternately the feelings of Isma'ili and Sunni alike. In his last years he seems to have wished to be regarded as a divine figure, above any rank which official Isma'ilism could accord him. A number of Isma'ilis were in fact inclined so to regard him and, evidently with his private permission, set about organizing a following in the expectations of a public acknowledgement of the position.[6]

The career of al-Hakim ended as mysteriously as it had began. One dark night in February 1021, as he rode on a

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5. Edward Mortimer, Faith and Power: The Politics of Islam, London , 1982, p. 49. Kamal Junbalat has written a number of articles and pamphlets on the Druze faith and he is considered as one of its major interpreters- a sort of a 'Mujtahid'. There are no good works on the Druze religion, partly because of the secretive nature of Druze beliefs and religious practices. Aside from Philip Hitti's Origins of the Druze People and Religion, New York, 1966, there is the rather abstract work by Sami Nasib Makarem, The Druze Faith, Delmar 1974, and a more general work by Nejla M. Abu-Izzeddin, The Druze: A New Study of Their History, Faith and Society, Leiden, 1984.

6. The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Vol.II, London,1965 p. 631.

donkey to his observatory outside of his capital, he was set upon and.....disappeared. He went his disciples asserted, into a state of occulation, whence he would return triumphant at the apportune time. Both Sunni and Shi`a will then be crushed, his religion will prevail and justice will fill the world. Millennial expectations, under a Mahdi ("guided one"), were not new with the Shi`a. In their origination and development they correspond to Judaco-Christian Messianic expectations.[7]

The sect owes its name to al-Darazi ("tailor"), a Turk from Bukhara who served as tailor in the court of al-Hakim.[8] They call themselves Muwahhidun, "unitarians".[9] The new cult found few adherents in Egypt. But in Syria (to which al-Darazi fled from the anger of a Cairo mob when he announced his doctrine) the new message struck home in the area at the foot of Mount Hermon. It is here that the movement can be said to have been born.[10] And Wadi al-Taym was the only district where Druzism struck permanent roots. It was introduced there by al-Darazi, who in 1019 fell in battle, probably against rivals one of whom might have been his successor in missionary activities. This was a Persian furrier from Khurasan named Hamzah. What predisposed the

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7. P.K. Hitti, op. cit., pp. 97-98.

8. Ibid., p. 96.

9. The Encyclopaedia of Islam, op. cit., p. 631.

10. Fahim I. Qubain, Crisis in Lebanon, Washington D.C. 1961, pp. 10-11.

people at Wadi al-Taym to accept and retain the new faith may be only conjectured. Probably they were already Shi'a if not Isma'ilis, and as peasants must have suffered economic disabilities and felt frustrated because of the delay in the appearance of the expected Mahdi to usher for them a new era of prosperity.[11]

Hamza became the brain of the movement. He worked out its dogmas,expounded its theology and gave esoteric meaning to its formulation. Hamza cut the nascent creed entirely loose from its mother Islam. The new moral code he introduced was simple and free of ritualism. It comprised seven precepts: devotion to truth (especially when dealing with fellow believers), concern for one another's safety, renunciation of all old faiths, detachment from those living in error, recognition of the existence of the divine prinicple in humanity, adherence to the works of Our Lord (al-Hakim) and absolute resignation to his will as manifested through his ministers.[12]

Hamza also met a violent death, shortly after al-Drazi, and his work was continued by al-Muqtana Baha-al-Din (d1042). Judged by his epistles Baha-al-Din was of Christian Syrian origin. Before the end of his life Baha-al-Din must have come to the conclusion that the world was not yet ready for the rich promises held by the new

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11. P.K. Hitti, Op. cit., p. 98.

12. Ibid., pp. 98-101.

religion. Since then the "door has been closed" in the face of those seeking entrance or exit. The sacred books have become secret books. They are kept in manuscript form. Only the few initiate, Uqqal ("intelligent ones"), have access to them.[13] The Uqqal follow a rigorous, puritanical code. They abstain from drink and smoke, refrain from abusive language, shun unlawful gain and conduct themselves with dignity and decorum. They can be outwardly distinguished by heavy white turbans, coarse wollen abas and white untrimmed beards. Qualified women are admissible to the religious hierarchy. The bulk of the community have remained Juhhal ("ignorant",uninitiated).[14]

Druze use no mosques, pay no legal alms (Zakah), observe no Ramadan fast, offer no five daily ceremonial prayers and undertake no pilgrimages to Mecca. They have their own shrine to which local pilgrimages are made. A shrine commemorating the burial place of Abdulla al-Tanukhi (d 1480) in Abayh (al-Shuf) is visited annually by barefooted hundreds, mostly women, from the neighbourhood. Al-Sayyid ("our lord"), as he is popularly known, was the last great commentator on Baha al-Din. Druze practice monogamy like their Christian neighbours, but divorce is

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13. Druze intellectuals today are calling for some of the secrecy surrounding the religion to be lifted. There are two reasons for this. One is to let the children know what their religion is all about, and the second to show the non-Druze that there is nothing suspicious about it, that it is nothing more than deep philosophy.

14. P.K. Hitti, op. cit., p. 101.

easy. Religious gatherings are held on thursday evenings in inconspicuous small buildings (Khalwas, "secluded places"), usually on hilltops, where scriptures are read and expounded and problems of communal interest are discussed.[15]

In their religious organization the Druze have no clear distinction between clergy and the laity. The entire Druze population is divided into two categories, those initiated into the secrects of the faith (uqqal) and those not initiated (juhhal). The latter, observers have reported, known hardly anything about the articles of faith in their religion, but they belong to the Druze religious community all the same and identify as Druze.[16]

The 'Uqqal' all those men and women who have received some information regarding the tenets of their religion and who are allowed to sit within the halls for worship, are also divided into two categories- the general and the special classes. The former are those who have passed the simple test of trust and can be permitted to know some elementary facts of religion. The special class may be described as those well founded in the knowledge of the mysteries of their religion. Except for some ostentatious signs of piety and asceticism, the 'Uqqal' had no social or

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15. Ibid., p. 102 and see Beaumont, Peter and others. The Middle East: A geographical Study, New York, 1978, p. 372.

16. Iliya F. Harick, Politics and Change in a Traditional Society Lebanon, 1711-1845, Princeton, 1968, p. 25.

political qualities which separated them from the rest of the population. They themselves did not think of themselves as clerics; they did not charge fees for the performance of religious ceremonies, they lived like other men, and like the rest, they went to war and enjoyed the reputation of being good fighters.[17]

Education among the Druze, religious men as well as lay population, was almost nonexistent. The only learning they had in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, reported a nienteenth-century writer who lived among them, was that of the stars and talisman. In case one aspired to become a judge, he added, one studied the Shari`ah. But how many among them could become judges? During the Shihabi rule the Durze government had only one judge at a time, who handled cases of a civil nature. In matters of personal status, the Shaykh al-Aql was in charge. Volney, who became well acquainted with their way of life, wrote that Druze children "are neither taught to read the Psalms, as among the Maronites, nor the Quran, like the Mahometans; hardly do the Shaykhs know how to write a letter. We know of no schools of any sort for children in the Druze community except for a short-lived school established in 1849 at al Mukhtarah.[18]

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17. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

18. Ibid., p. 26.

As with the Maronites, the Druze society was divided economically into three classes: tenants, property owners, and muqati`jis (hereditary chiefs). We do not have a very clear record of the proportion of tenants to landowners in Mount Lebanon, and only rough estimates or guesses are possible in this respect. Volney indicated a high percentage of property owners, but unfortunately he did not find it necessary to distinguish between tenants and propertied peasants; he believed there was not much difference between the two groups since tenants rented the land and it became their responsibility. Shaykh Shayban al Khazin, at approximately the same time as Volney, seems to confirm the latter's account, at least in so far as Maronite Kisrwan was concerned. According to this account, apparently the larger part of the land belonged to small peasnats. One also gets the impression from chronicles and other records that property ownership was widespread among the Maronites from Kisrwan to Jibbat Bsharri, as well as among the Druze population.[19]

As for the muqati`ji class, both Druze and Maronite, only a few remained the owners of great estates by the first part of the nineteenth century, among whom the Junbalats were the largest landowners. Th muqati`jis gradually alienated a large proportion of their land through sales and donations as waqfs (mortmain). Their property itself was

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19. Ibid., p. 27.

parceled in small plots as a result of increase in their numbers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, especially in the case of the Maronite muqati`jis.[20]

Druze had managed their internal affairs as a virtually autonomous community and developed a peculiar feudal system from the time they were first established in Lebanon. Ordinarily Islamic feudalism was based on the non-hereditary iqta`- the revocable right to the revenue of a village or district, granted by a sovereign to a civil or military officers as part of his salary. Under such a system it was difficult for local feudal aristocracies to develop, for the iqta` frequently changed hands, and remained throughout under the direct control of the central government. In the Druze mountains, the iqta` system did not regulary apply. Even during the Mamluk period, when Islamic feudalism was most strictly organized and centralized, the Druze, maintained their peculiar feudal traditions with the tacit recognition of the Mamluk government. The central government invested the leading Druze chief of his day with some formal authority, technically as an officer of the Sultan's provincial cavalry. But this modest position was far exceeded by the local power and prestige which such a chief enjoyed. As supreme emir, the paramount Druze chief headed a feudal system based on hereditary land tenure, and

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20. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

was the overlord of a number of feudal families who controlled the various Druze districts. During the Mamluk period the leading Druze emirs were the Buhturs, also called the Tanukhs, who were hereditary lords of the Gharb.[21] They emerged as a dominant political force in Mount Lebanon with the 15th-century Tanukhid dynasty, although they were still technically vassals of the Mamluke Empire. The power of the Druze feudal aristocracy was consolidated during the first 150 years of Ottoman rule.[22] However, the Buhturs lost their supremacy and were replaced in the paramount Druze cheiftainship by their kinsmen the Ma`ns, lords of the Shuf.[23]

The Ottomans did not attempt to change the Druze political status. Like their Mamluk predecessors, they permitted the Druze to maintain their special feudal traditions and to manage their internal affairs as they pleased. As mentioned earlier, under the Ottomans, however, the Ma`ns came to enjoy a power and prestige which the Buhturs, under the Mamluks, had never known.[24] The Ma`nis extended their domain, which was originally confined to al-Shuf, both in south Lebanon and toward the north. As a result of Ma`ni expansion in the north, a bitter conflict

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21. Kamal S. Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, London, 1965, pp 4-5.

22. David Butter, op. cit., p. 20.

23. Kamal S. Salibi, op. cit., 1965, p. 5.

24. Ibid., p. 5.

developed between the Turkoman chiefs of that region and Fahkr al-Din (1585-1635). Fakhr al Din's first success was in Kisrwan, which he annexed and bestowed upon his Maronite advisor, Abu Nadir al Khazin, in 1616. Thus the Khazins became the first Maronite house to achieve muqati`ji status... In the south, Fakhr al-Din's early campaigns took the lands of the Sanjak of Sidon which are known as the iqlims (districts) of al Kharrub, Tuffah,Jazzin, and the Jabal al Rayhan.[25] Thus, the Druze political ascendancy was established throughout the country.

Hegemony of the Druze in Lebanon, established in the early seventeenth century, remained unchallenged for a long time. Although Maronite notables frequently rose to postions of influence as the assistants and advisors of the emirs, it was the Druze feudal chiefs who remained the mainstay of the Lebanese Emirate. In time, however, Druze power began to decline. By the end of mid-eighteenth century the growth of the Maronite community in numbers and social importance had become a matter of political consequnce. The Druze ranks, on the other hand, had been steadily weakened by internal divisions which reflected power rivalries among the Druze feudal families, and which the Shihab emirs hastened to exploit.[26]

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25. Iliya F. Harik, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

26. Kamal S. Salibi, op. cit., 1965, pp. 5-6.

Throughout the seventeenth century, while the Ma'ns ruled Lebanon, the Ottomans were able to keep the country divided under control by discreetly encouraging the rift between the rival Druze factions. This the Ottomans continued to do after succession of the Shihabs. But the new emirs of Lebanon, more capable on the whole than their predecessors, were better able to deal with the Yemenite opposition. Under Bashir I (1697-1707), the internal situation in the country was relatively peaceful, and the emir was able to extend his influence southwards over Jabal Amil and northern Palestine. This extension of Shihab power disturbed the Ottoman Pasha of Sidon. But when Haydar Shihab (1707-1732), cousin and successor of Bashir I, stressed his authority over Jabal Amil in 1708 by removing the local governor appointed from Sidon and replacing him by one of his own men, the Pasha was infuriated. In retaliation, he nominated Yusuf Alam al-Din, the head of the Yemenite party, as emir of Lebanon, and sent him with Ottoman troops from Sidon to expel Haydar from Dayr al-Qamar, his capital. The town was occupied in 1709, and Haydar was forced to escape. But the triumph of Yusuf al-Din was short-lived. Smarting at their defeat, the Qaysite Druze soon rose to strike back, rallying their forces around the young Shihab Emir. The yemenites reacted by attacking the Qaysite forces assembled at the village of Ayn Dara in 1711. But the yemenite attack was a complete failure. The yemenite forces were utterly routed in a fierce battle,

their leaders the Alam al-Din were slaughtered to a man, and the yemenite power in Lebanon was completely crushed. Yemenite Druze who survived the battle were expelled from Lebanon and forced to seek refuge in the Hawran, beyond the Anti-Lebanon, where a large Druze community thrives to this day.[27]

The defeat of the Yemenites at Ayn Dara was an event of great importance in Lebanese history. It firmly established the power of the Shihabs, and temporarily ended the dissensions among the Druze. The expulsion of yemenites from the country was to be of serious consequence in the long run, for it reduced the size of the Druze community and increased the relative numerical strength of the Maronites. But for the moment the balance of sectarian power remained unchanged. In fact, the immediate effect of the resounding Qaysite victory was to bolster up the Druze political ascendancy, as the Qaysite Druze rallied around Haydar Shihab to divide the spoil of battle.[28]

THE SHIHABIS:

By the late eighteenth century the Yazbaki-Junbalati partisanship, started among the Druze, had come to involve the whole Lebanese Emirate. But the fact that the Druze could still impose their party divisions on the rest of the country was poor compensation for their steady, and now

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27. Ibid., pp. 7-8.

28. Ibid., p. 8.

evident, loss of power. When Emir Mulhim retired, the Druze were already a minority in their own districts. The Maronites, on the other hand, were becoming noticeably stronger. Impressed by the unmistakable shift in the sectarian balance, Mulhim, who was himself a devout Muslim, permitted and possibly encouraged his children to embrace Christianity after his retirement. Meanwhile, the struggle between Yazbakis and Junbalatis further weakend the Druze postion; and as the years went by other Shihab and Abu'l-Lam emirs followed the example of Mulhim's sons and became Christians. In 1770, when Emir Mansur, relinquished the Emirate, the Maronite Emir Yusuf, eldest son of Mulhim, succeeded him, and the rule of the Christian Shihabs began.[29]

Thus, the Maronite-Druze balance of power in the eighteenth century underwent a serious change, as the Maronites replaced the Druze in political predominance. The conversion of Emir Mulhim's sons to Christianity in 1756, and the succession of the Maronite Yusuf Shihab in 1770 finally set the seal to the Druze decline. But although the Maronites were now recognizably the dominant group, the Druze remained a powerful force with which the Shihabs had to reckon. The Maronite Shihabs, in fact, were so concerned about keeping Druze goodwill that they refrained from publicly admitting their Christianity, and for a long time

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29. Ibid., p. 11-12.

continued to profess Druzism.[30]

Bashir Shihab II the emir of Mount Lebanon from 1789 to 1840 and a Sunni by birth but a Christian convert, infringed upon the hereditary privileges of Druze feudal families and in some cases, such as the Junbalats, the Imads and the Abu-Nakads, dispossessed them outright.[31] He followed a policy of favouritism toward the Christian majority and at times, instigated them against the Druze. By confiscations and forced sales Bashir II had robbed the Druze feudal class of vast lands, and these lands had come in time to be redistributed among the rising class of well-to-do Christian villagers and townsmen.[32] Besides, he absorbed under his Emirate those prerogatives which were traditionally enjoyed by Druze chiefs in their districts: they collected taxes for the governement at a profit, maintained peace and order and, most important, exercised judicial authority of the first instance over all civil and criminal cases involving penalties short of death.[33]

Moreover, Bashir destroyed the cohesiveness of the Druze community by destroying the feudal families. In destroying this class, Shihab effectively dissolved the

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30. Ibid., pp. 13-14.

31. Leila M.T. Meo, Lebanon: Improbable Nation, Bloomington, 1965, p. 13.

32. Kamal S. Salibi, op. cit., 1965, p. 47.

33. Ibid., p. 48.

community into autonomous villages. Thus, in each confrontation of Christians and Druze, the entire Maronite community could be brought to bear against a single Druze village, this put the Druze to great disadvantage in such instances as the disarmament of 1835.[34]

Syria and Lebanon were occupied by the Egyptian armies of Ibrahim Pasha, Muhammad Ali's son, in 1831-1832.[35] Ibrahim Pasha forcibly disarm Druze and robbed of their choice youth, who were taken away from their homes and fields to fight in distant wars. When their grievances against Egyptians rule finally drow them to revolt, Ibrahim Pasha had suppressed their rising and sent the foremost Druze leaders into exile. No wonder that many Druze families at the time were broken up and dispersed, and that the community on the whole became weak and impoverished.[36] Christians who were as serfs in the 1920's of such Druze Shaykhs as the Abu Nakad and at the end of the Egyptian period as the chief moneylenders to the same shaykhs. The Egyptian occupatin had allowed them to steal a march economically on the Druze, and they had used it to full advantage.[37] Thus, the power and prestige of Druze further weakened under Emir Bashir II and Egyptian rule.

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34. William R. Polk, The Opening of South Lebanon, 1788-1840, Harvard University, 1963, p. 133.

35. Leila M.T. Meo, op. cit., p. 14.

36. Kamal S. Salibi, op. cit., 1965, pp. 47-48.

37. William R. Polk, op. cit., p. 137.

But Emir Bashir's alliance with the Egyptian army of occupation led ultimately to his downfall. Moves to conscript Druze into Egyptian army provoked major revolt in Syria in 1838-39, and in Lebanon the repressed Druze lords and the heavily exploited Maronite peasantry joined forces against the Egyptians and the emir.

Druze leaders exiled in 1825 came back to reclaim their lands, much of which had been handed over to Maronites.[38] These chiefs jointly presented their demands to Bashir III who succeeded to the Emirate after the fall of Bashir II. The emir, without having the ability of his predecessor tried to follow his policy in opposing the Druze chiefs and reducing their influence. He also followed the same policy with the Christian feudal families, notably the Khazins and Hubayshes of the Kisrwan, forcing these families to make common cause with the Druze chiefs against him.[39] Later in 1841, Bashir III summoned the Druze chiefs to a meeting in Dayr al- Qamar to consider the distribution of taxes and other questions of general interest. The chiefs answered the summons and arrived outside the town on 13 October, each accompanied by a large party of his own men and of other Druze horsemen from Wadi al-Taym and the Hawran.[40] They attacked the town and forced Bashir III to take refuge in the old princely palace of Dayr al-Qamar.

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38. David Butter, op. cit., p. 20.

39. Kamal S. Salibi, op. cit., 1965, p. 45.

40. Ibid., p. 49.

'Umar Pasah was appointed Governer of Mount Lebanon after the fall of Bashir III. As Governer of Mount Lebanon, 'Umar Pasha's main concern was to put an end to all thought of a Shihab restoration. Immediately upon establishing himself in the palace of Bayt al-Din, he began to rally around him all those elements in the country who were already opposed to the Shihabs, winning their support by showing them special favour. The Druze feudal chiefs who had been dispossessed by Bashir II and Bashir III were given back their old estates and reconfirmed in their traditional prerogatives.[41]

The pasha's, main interest was to establish his own authority in Lebanon and make the direct Ottoman rule of the country practicable. However, the Druze leaders felt that it was their own efforts that the Shihabs had been overthrown and the regime of direct Ottoman administration established, and they were therefore unwilling to receive dictation from the Turks. In the face of such Druze pretensions, 'Umar Pasha turned for support to the Maronites, employing a number of them in his service as troops under their own leaders. This only alienated the Druze still further.[42] A dual administration was duly imposed after European intervention, but division of the mountain between north (Maronite) and south (Druze) only exacerbated growing

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41. Ibid., p. 53.

42. Ibid., p. 59.

sectarian tensions, leading to the savage Druze-Maronite war of 1860, which left well over 10,000 people dead, most of them Christians.[43] Thus Druze military power increased after the 1860 civil war.

The outbreak of the world War I in 1914 brought stricter controls over the administrations of Turkey's eastern provinces. Lebanese autonomy was at first violated, then officially abolished in October, 1915, when Mutasarrifyya regime was replaced by direct Ottoman rule. At the close of the war in 1918, Lebanon was temporarily administered by the French military authorities, and in 1922 it was confirmed by the League of Nations as a French mandate.[44] On 1 September, 1920, General Gouraud proclaimed the "independence" of Greater Lebanon. The state now included the areas for which Maronite spokesmen had been clamouring- the Bekka Valley in the east, Jabal Amil in the south, and the coastal areas including the towns of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre.[45] The new boundaries also brought some changes in the demographic picture of the state. The Druze lost their former position as the dominant Muslim sect to the Sunnis, who emerged as the main challengers to the Maronites' numerical preponderance and political predominance.[46]

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43. David Butter, op. cit., p. 20.

44. Leila M.T. Meo, op. cit., p. 40.

45. Ibid., p. 47.

46. Ibid., p. 47.

Some Druze noblemen and their followers were moved by the Arab natinalist-unionist spirit. But the community as a whole put one thing above everything else: the protection and preservation of its traditional institutions and feudal organization from outside interference. If the mandatory was ready to guarantee their inviolability, then they, the Druze, would cooperate with it as they had cooperated with their former protector, Britain. Their participation in the 1925-1926 rebellion[47] was primarily an expression of solidarity with their kinfolk in Jabal Druze. With the back of the rebellion broken, the Lebanese Druze declared their allegiance to their legal government and settled down to a fruitfull participation in its institutions and to cooperate with the French. Lively competition between their two leading and rival families, the Arslans and the Junbalats, netted down them a greater share of political power than would have otherwise been theirs.[48] At the time of independence, the Druze, represented by Emir Majid Arslan, were viewed as the

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47. In the summer of 1925 open revolt broke out in the autonomous Jabal Druze (within Syria) against French reform measures which had struck at the traditional institutions of the Druze. The revolt soon spread to other parts of Syria, taking on the aspect of an Arab nationalist liberation movement and in the spring of 1926 it reached those districts of Lebanon that had been annexed in 1920 to form the larger state. But the rebellion was finally quelled in the early months of 1927. For detail study of 1925-1926 rebellion see, Joyce Laverty Miller, 'The Syrian Revolt of 1925,' International Journal of Middle East Studies, 8 (1977), pp. 545-563.

48. Leila M.T. Meo, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

guardian-community of Lebanon. Arslan, whose reputation of tough leadership and warrior-like physical appearance, became Defence Minister in the first cabinet after independence. By virtue of the Druze historic role in the political formation of Lebanon and because of the Druze reputation of superior fighting skills, the post of the army chief of staff was to be reserved to a Druze.[49]

KAMAL JUNBALAT:

However, it was left to modern Lebanon's most charismatic leader, the late Kamal Junbalat, to bring the Druze back to prominence in a state where they are a relatively small minority. Unlike most of his peers, Junbalat had no direct exposure to politics prior to assuming the leadership of his clan. During the mandate period, his mother- the very able and remarkable (sitt) Nazira- provided whatever leadership the Junbalati House needed after the assassination of her husband in 1921, and thus paved the way for her son's leadership. This enabled Junbalat to succeed to his father's position without having to go through the tedious process of political maneuvering that marked the political careers of many Lebanese leaders, particularly those who did not inherit the political Zaamah of certain communities. Having no such concerns, Junbalat

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49. Farid al-Khazen, 'Kamal Jumblatt, the Uncrowned Druze Prince of the Left,' Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 24, No. 2, (April, 1988), p. 191.

devoted much of his efforts to broaden his non-Druze power base, promote his ideals and ultimately leave his imprint on every aspect of Lebanese politics.[50]

Kamal Junbalat was a man of many identities, a feudal lord, a socialist, a poet, a Gandhian, a pro-Palestinian and an Arabist.[51] In the opinion of both friend and foe, Kamal Junbalat was perhaps Lebanon's most exceptional political figure. Indeed he was one of those leaders who could not be defeated politically, for he could always obtain unconditional support from Druze supporters whose loyalty to the Junbalat House was least influenced by Kamal Socialism, Arabism, or Lebanism. Such legitimacy, rooted in history and communal traditions, gave Junbalat little cause for concern about any shifts affecting his Druze power base. This also gave him significant margin of political maneuverability enjoyed by few Lebanese leaders.[52]

As early as 1949, Junbalat had founded under his leadership a political party which he called the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP)[53]- a party which included some Christians and Sunni and Shi`a Muslims along with its main following of Junbalat Druze.[54] The secular and progressive

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50. Ibid., p. 179.

51. Gordon C. David, Lebanon: The Fragmented Nation, London, 1980, p. 156.

52. Ibid., p. 178.

53. In arabic it is, al Hizb al-Ishtiraqi al-Taqaddumi.

54. Kamal S. Salibi, Crossroads to the Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976, London, 1976, p. 12.

rhetoric of his party (PSP) helped him to extend his leadership and appeal well outside his community. Yet, he always maintained a traditional "feudal" image among his constituency as the "lord of the Mukhtarah", a tittle he himself had accepted.[55]

In 1952, in alliance with Camille Chamoun, Raymond Iddi and others, Junbalat played a leading role in forcing the resignation of Bishara al-Khuri, the first president of independent Lebanon, and in securing the election of Chamoun to succeed him. Once Chamoun was in power, however, he lost patiance with the socialism of Kamal Junbalat and his ambitions to act as godfather to the new regime, and the two Shuf leaders drifted apart. Because the political following of the Camille Chamoun was numerically superior to that of Junbalat in the Shuf, it was difficult for Junbalat to win an election in the religiously mixed constituency against obstruction from Chamoun, particularly as the latter was now president. In 1957, when the second parliamentary election under Chamoun were held, Junbalat, who was already on bad terms with the President, had to fight his electoral campaign on his own, and lost his seat in parliament, to the wrath of the Junbalati Druze who now marked out Chamoun as a sworn enemy. In 1958, Junbalat and his Druze followers opted for Nasserist pan-Arabism, joining the Muslim rebellion against Chamoun regime. After 1958, and more

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55. As`ad Abu Khalil, `Druze, Sunni and Shiite Political Leadership in Present-Day Lebanon', Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 4, 1985, p. 12.

pronouncedly after 1961, the powerful Druze leader emerged as a leading supporter of Fuad Shihab.[56]

The electoral setback, however, was no major impediment to Junbalat's `reintegration' in the system following the ending of the 1958 crisis and the election of General Shihab to the presidency. The reluctant truce that Junbalat declared with Shihab (and later with the Shihabist establishment) was in effect an `opposition from within'. Thus, as Junbalat held several cabinet posts in the 1960s, he never hesitated to criticise, and sometimes denounce , the policies of cabinets of which he was a member. In addition Shihab's working ralationship with Nasser deprived Junbalat as well as other Muslim leaders of pan-Arab political platforms usually used for internal political purposes.[57]

After having been `neutralized' in internal politics by Shihab's reformist[58] policies, Junbalat's attention turned to regional problems, particularly the Arab-Israeli conflict. Just as the 1967 war was a turning point for many

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56. Kamal S. Salibi, op. cit., 1976, pp. 12-13.

57. Farid al- Khazin, op. cit. pp. 180-181.

58. Among reforms enacted was an extension of the public school system, of rural electrification, of medical dispensaries, and effort were made to improve the system of social insurance. Moreover, a civil service board was appointed to raise administrative standereds, and accounting was made stricter. A secret ballot was introduced, and Parliament was enlarged to 99 members from 66, the purpose being partly to democratize and partly to weaken the power of the notables.

Arab leaders, it was a major impetus for Junbalat's strong backing of armed struggle against Israel, and his advocacy of unrestrained Palestinian military activities in Lebanon. Following Nasser's death, Junbalat espoused a position in line with that of Damascus and developed a close relationship with the PLO and several other Arab leftist groups.[59]

The 1967 defeat radicalized Arab politics to an unprecedented scale. And PLO became the single most important rhetorical issue in Junbalat's political pronouncement.[60] One statement of his programme was made by him in May 1969, a month of confrontation between the Army and the Palestinians, when he laid down conditions for his party's participation in the Government. His views then were similar to those he expressed during the Civil War, in January 1976. Among his conditions in 1969 were: full freedom to be given to the Palestinian commandos to operate across the Lebanese border; the istitution of obligatory military service; the implementation of a number of social reform including the creation of a Credit Bank for Agriculture and Industry and the elaboration of a plan for development, and the abolition of political confessionalism in the electoral system and in other spheres of the Lebanese system.[61] His role in the prolongation of the ministerial

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59. Farid al- Khazen, op. cit., p. 181.

60. Ibid., p. 181.

61. David C. Gordon, op. cit., p. 158.

crisis in 1969, which was ended with the signing of the Cairo Agreement, inaugurated a new pattern of aggressive leftist politics. One concrete action was Junbalat's controversial decision to legalize a number of radical and anti-system parties. He did that in his capacity as the Minister of the Interior in the first cabinet formed after the 1969 crisis- a portfolio he requested as a condition for joining the cabinet. But despite such actions, Junbalat was willing to support the candidacy of a 'non-progressive' leader like Frangiyeh in the presidential elections of 1970[62] rather than that of the Shihabist candidate, Elias Sarkis, with whom he was more in agreement politically and ideologically.[63]

The formation of National Movement or Lebanese National Movement (LNM) in 1969 under the leadership of Kamal Junbalat further enhanced his prestige. Lebanese National Movement brought together a large coalition of anti-confessional parties which included Arab nationalists and Marxists. These parties and organizations formulated a common programme.[64] LNM under the leadership of Kamal Junbalat, had pressed and agitated in favour of a radical reform of the Lebanese political system. It had called for

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62. It is believed that PSP deputies split vote equally between Sarkir and Franjiyeh. This had a decisive impact on the outcome of the elections, since Frangiyeh won by a majority of one vote.

63. Farid al-Khazen, op. cit., p. 181.

64. B. J. Odeh, Lebanon: Dynamics of Conflict, London, 1985,p. 115.

amendments to the Lebanese Consititution and changes in the Electoral Law, which would secure the abolition of the principle of sectarian representation in public office, and in parliament, in favour of what it called "social" or "popular" representation. Most of all, it had attacked the "National Covenant," which the conservatives maintained was the ideal formula for Lebanon- a country composed of many religious communites, each with a keen sense of its peculiar historical and social identity and interests.[65]

The 1970s were the heyday of Junbalat, the `socialist'. He skillfully seized the opportunity to expand his power base and push not merely for reforms, but more important, for system change. In addition to his image as the pan-Arab leader of the radical left, Junbalat was also the recipient of the Lenin Medal for Peace in 1972. A year later, he became the Secretary General of a leftist pro-PLO umbrella organization with members drawn from several Arab countries, known as the Arab Front [66] for the Support of the Palestinian Revolution. Junbalat power reached a peak level with the formation of the first `pro-leftist' cabinet headed by Rashid al-Sulh, whc was Junbalat protege and nominee for the post. The Sulh cabinet, in which the Phalangists and the Junbalatis were equally

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65. Kamal S. Salibi, op. cit., 1976, p. 82.

66. In 1975, following the Ayn al-Rummaneh incident the Front, at a meeting in Beirut, called for the `isolation of the Phalangist party in Lebanese politics (as well as in the Arab World).

represented, disintegrated with the outbreak of war in 1975.[67]

The power of Junbalat on the eve of the war was not only due to his leadership of the left or his close alliance with the PLO. It was due to his most significant political achievement that was his control over the pan-Arab street, particularly in Beirut. In this way he was able to undermine the power base of traditional Sunni Zu`ama'. In fact, Junbalat's nomination of Rashid Sulh-who was not regarded as a major Sunni Zaim-was opposed by leaders like Salam and Karami. Junbalat pan-Arab, leftist, and pro-Palestinian political platform left little room for his rival to maneuver. For a brief but crucial time, Junbalat became Lebanon's Nasser in the eyes of the Muslim `street'. Likewise, Junbalat's championing of social causes made him the outspoken defender of the underprivileged communities. And in the 1970 s, he gained the support of an important segment of a politically active Christian intelligentsia.[68]

The Civil War was a tempting ground for Junbalat's abuse of power. But this cost him a great deal. In the first place, it undercut his credibility and popularity among both Christian and Muslim sympathizers. His famous call for the `isolation' and banning of the Kata'ib party,

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67. Farid al-Khazen, op. cit., p. 181.

68. Ibid., pp. 181-182.

issued in the name of the Arab Front for the Support of the Palestinian Revolution, following a meeting held in Beirut, was an early warning to many somewhat neutral Christian sympathizers regarding Junbalat's ultimate intensions. Moreover, his conistent defiance of some prominent Sunni leaders generated greater unity among the Sunnis in the face of the rapid rise of radical leftist groups over which the traditional Sunni leadership had little control. The ultimate price that Junbalat had to pay-his life-occured when, in the midst of the war, he revealed his true objectives to the wrong person: to Syrian President Assad. Junbalat made it clear that the war was more than a conflict over some vague issues of domestic reform; his was against the realities of historical change. But this, too, was how Assad viewed the war: as being his own against internal and external enemies, especially when the latter were led by the PLO.[69]

As fighting intensified and as the country entered the first phase of its de facto partition, the outcome of the war concerned the already divided Lebanese less than the new antagonistic patrons of post-war Lebanon: Syria and the PLO. As a result, Junbalat's own designs for Lebanon had to be reconciled with one of these two parties. For various tactical reason, Junbalat opted for a political and military alliance with the PLO. This was solidified by Junbalat's

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69. Ibid., p. 182.

rejection of the Syrian-sponsored 1976 Constitutional Document[70] and by subsquent PLO-leftist military assaults, particularly in the Mountain. Not surprisingly, Damascus intervened in full force against the Junbalat-PLO forces and defeated it. On 16 March 1977, Junbalat was assassinated in broad daylight near Mukhtara-not far from a Syrian checkpoint.[71]

WALID JUNBALAT:

As for the present political leadership, Walid Junbalat, the son of Kamal Junbalat appears to be the sole leader of the Druze community in Lebanon. Although Walid Junbalat enjoys enormous popularity and influence within his sect, he could not maintain the broad-based support of his father Kamal, which extended far outside the narrow boundaries of the Druze community... Walid, on the other hand, has emerged as the leader of his own sect who is more concerned with the affairs of his community.[72] Although at

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70. The Constitutional Document did indeed institutionalize the Unwritten sectarian arrangement of the National Pact: the presidency of the republic would be reserved to a Maronite, that of the Council of Ministers to a Sunni, and that of the Chamber of Deputies to a Shi`a. Under this arrangement, the Druze Community would be relegated to the position it had held within the confessional system. This meant that Junbalat political ambitions would remain curtailed by the workings of confessional politics, and that he would remain the prisoner of system in which he had little faith. This was certainly unacceptable.

71. Farid al-Khazen, op. cit., p. 182.

72. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., p. 31.

29, he was the leader of the Lebanese National Movement, considered to be one of the most progressive leftist movement in the Arab world.[73] But Walid's ineffective control over the LNM, led to the gradual dismantling of the National Movement, which was completed by the summer of 1982, and its remnants have since been completely subordinated to the Syrian regime.[74]

Walid Junbalat's successful military offensive in the summer of 1983 against the Christain Lebanese Force in the Shuf and the ʿAley region recouped the losses he had incurred from the attempts made by those Forces to share power with him in his feudal domain, in the wake of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Junbalat's task was facilitated by the fact that the spiritual leaders of the Druze community had important links to Israel and that Syria played a crucial role in supporting militarily the Druze militias in the region.[75] The PSP behind which the Druze community rallied, emerged as the protector of the Druze heartland. In times of sectarian threat, the Lebanese communities resort to their history and take refuge in their confessional heritage. Under these circumstances, Walid has been elevated to the status of the traditional and only representative of the Druze community.[76]

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73. Farid al-Khazin, op. cit., p. 184.
74. Marius K. Deeb, ʿLebanon: Prospects for National Reconciliation in the Mid-1980's, The Middle East Journal, Vol. 38, No. 2, (Spring, 1984), p. 227.
75. Ibid., p. 277.
76. Asʿad Abu Khalil, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

The Lebanese Druze families, who are divided into Yazbakis and Junbalatis are unanimously rallying behind the well organized Progressive Socialist Party, which has defended the Druze hearland against Phalangist advances. Furthermore, the Yazbaki branch has suffered numerous setbacks. First, it has lost its historical leader, Majid Arsalan, who himself found it difficult to challenge effectively the more charismatic and, of course, sofisticated appeal of Kamal Junbalat. Secondly, Majid's son Prince Faysal, committed a fatal mistake by closely associating himself with Bashir Gemayel and the Lebanese Forces before and after the Israeli invasion. Adding to this weakness of the Yazbaki branch is the lack of a Yazbaki Shaykh al-`Aql (the highest Druze religious authority). The Yazbaki could not agree on a successor to the last one, who died years ago. The present Shaykh al-`aql, Muhammad Abu Shaqra[77], is a Junbalati who is completely subordinate to

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77. Shaykh Muhammad Abu-Shakra died on 24 October 1991. He was born in the village of Ammadour, a short distance to the south of al Mukhtara, the seat of power of the Junbalat family and receive his early education there. Shakra inherited from his father an involvement in Arab nationalist politics at a time when the region was passing through the turmoil of achieving independence from Ottoman Turkey and, later, from France and Britain. In 1949 he was elected one of the three Shykh al`aqls. In 1970, after the death of the last rival Shaykh al `aql Shaykh Muhmmad was acknowledged to be the supreme spiritual leader of the community, and an act of the Lebanese Parliament stipulated that henceforth there would be only one Druze cleric bearing that title. The act further consolidated Shaykh Muhammad's fame and extended his influence into Syria and Israel, making him the only universally recognized Shaykh al- Aql among the 1.1 million Druze in West Asia. An important reform initiated by him was the modernization of the Druze judiciary, which had become hereditary. Another was the setting up of an elected council of elders, the Majlis al-Mazhabi.

the Junbalati political leadership.[78] This also enchanced the position of Walid Junbalat.

Moreover, there exists within the Druze religious tradition a pecularity that has facilitated the unchallenged leadership of Walid Junbalat. Why was he not opposed, for example, by the Druze religious establishment? It is very clear today that Druze religious leaders (al-mashayikh) have seldom played the role that has been assumed by Sunni and Shi`a religious leaders. The reasons for this unique phenomenon within the Lebanese context lie in the very doctrines of Druzism. According to the tenets of the Druze sect, there exists no mediator between one's belief and God. A Druze believer, has to practice his religion in a highly secretive and personal manner that leaves no room for a prestigious religious establishment to intervene on behalf of God's will. Secondly, Druzism is by its very nature secretive due to a history of fierce religious persecution. This has led the Druze to reveal very little of their religion: "Nine tenth of one's religion is to be found in the taqiyah (the part of religion never revealed to outsiders). "Al-istitar bi-al-ma'luf (concealment by what is familiar) is a major Druze doctrine that explains the Druze attitude towards any political authority. According to this doctrine, a Druze conceals his genuine religious position in order to avoid oppression. Thus Druzism is distinctively a

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78. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., p. 33.

monastic religion, whereby a true believer is supposed to adhere to the demands of al-`aql (the Universal Mine) alone. This has placed Druze political leaders in an unchallenged position. Whether doctrine dictates that Druze should follow their own minds or not, the Druze masses are going to seek guidance anyway. The tradition of family loyalty is far stronger than any philosophical teaching. Finally, as mentioned earlier, the primary concern for the Druze community has historically been survival and religious autonomy, regardless of the kind of state it lives under.[79]

The leadership of Walid Junbalat is a typical Lebanese traditional family leadership. The leader's legitimacy is primarily derived from the sectarian conciousness of his community. He also enjoys the support of the Druze bourgeoisie, who have prospered during the Civil War by establishing a strong industrial base in Shuwayfat. This new bourgeoisie has a stake in maintaining this important geographical base in order to supply customers in the area of `Aley and the Shuf' and to have direct access to the sea and its illegal existing and prospective ports. This group funds the PSP according to an established illegal tax system. The fighters of the PSP come from the lower classes, who are suffering extensive unemployment as a result of the war. The leadership of the PSP includes members from middle-class families.[80]

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79. Ibid., pp. 32-33.

80. Ibid., pp. 33-34.

Both the Junbalati and Yazbaki factions of the Druze have demanded a larger share of power in the political establishment. The Druze in Lebanon rank numerically fifth if not sixth among the major sects, constituting around seven percent of the total Lebanese population. They justify their demand for the estalishment of a senate with its presidency given to a Druze on the grounds that the Druze played an important historical role in the creation of modern Lebanon, when the Druze Ma`nids and Shihabs ruled Mount Lebanon from the 17th to the mid-19th century. In practice they have tried to achieve their objectives by resorting to arms, and allying themselves with both Syria and Israel. As the Druze occupy the strategic mountains close to Beirut, they were able to shell the city and its suburbs, and paralyze the government as well as close the airport. There were widespread rumours in the summer of 1983 that the Druze were entertaining the idea of establishing a Druze state in the regions they controlled, as a buffer state between Syria and Israel. The eviction of the Christian civilian population from Bhamdun and many villages of the Shuf and Aley region strenthened these rumours. Although the Yazbaki leadership remained basically in favour of the political establishment and "legitimacy" (al-Shar`iya), Junbalat leadership prevailed both militarily and politically. Walid Junbalat's stand in the Geneva talks on national reconciliation stems from his patron-client relationship with Syria. His insistence on the abrogation

of the Lebanese-Israeli Accord of May 17, 1983, rings hollow in the ears of traditional leaders such as Saib Salam when it is clear that it is due partly to the Druze-Israeli connection that Junbalat was able to achieve his objectives in the Shuf mountains.[81]

However, Junbalat's fate is now tied to the Syrian regime of Hafiz al-Asad, and he cannot easily extricate himself from his Syrian partrons. In the first place, they are his neighbours in the Shuf and have considerable military and political capability against him. In the second, his father's fate must forever be a preoccupation. In the third, he must bear in mind the welfare of the Syrian Druze community as well as that of the Lebanese Druze. To make his task more difficult, he must be particularly careful in dealing with the Syrians because his father's legacy of opposition to them makes his own motivation suspect in their eyes.[82]

Secondly, it must be mentioned that there is developing within the PSP itself a faction that voices strong rejection of Walid's "feudal" leasdership. This faction cannot reconcile with traditional leadership of Junbalat with his progressive pronouncements. The faction seek to abolish the family leadership that arrogantly treats the Druze as mere followers. Ghalib Abu Muslih, who heads the faction, is said to be influenced by Marxist ideas. Abu Muslih's faction calls for the utilization of class analysis in order

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81. Marius K. Deeb, op. cit., p. 278.
82. Ibid., p. 277.

to understand the class and family divisions within the Druze community. Its ultimate aim is to eliminate family leadership, particularly that of Walid Junbalat and his party. The group chose t operate within the organizational framework of the PSP in order to challege Walid from the very basis of his support. However, it had failed to spread outside ʿAlay and appears to be out of touch with the rank and file of the Druze, who are overwhelmed by sectarian conciousness and traditional loyalty and allegiance to the PSP leader.[83]

No doubt that the Druze community lost their former position as the dominant Muslim sect with the establishment of Greater Lebanon in 1920. And their political and economic power has been eroded over the few decades. But the Druze community who had played a crucial role in the making of Lebanon had continued to play an important role in spite of being less in numbers. This reflects their strong sense of cohesion as a community despite the fact that there were internal division amongst them either into the Arslans or the Junbalat. They might squable among themselves and take different sides in civil crisis, but they avoid open intra- confessional strife since they consider their loyalty to community much more important than allegiance to either Syrianism or Arabism. In the past , they had found strong leadership from Junbalati family, and have continued to do so in the recent history. The assassination of Junbalat in

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83. Asʿad Abu Khalil, op. cit., pp. 34-35.

1977 inflicted a severe blow to Druze community who was their most powerful representative in the political arena.

However, as mentioned above, Walid Junbalat who took over the leadership of the Junbalati house, after the death of his father, Kamal Junbalat, enjoys enormous popularity and influence within his sect. He could not maintain the broad based support of his father Kamal, which extended far outside the narrow boundaries of the Druze community. Walid on the other hand, has emerged as leader of his own sect who is more concerned with the affairs of his community. His successful military offensive in the summer 1983 against the Christian Lebanese Forces in the Shuf and the `Aley regions recouped the losses he had incurred from the attempts made by these Forces to share power with him in his feudal domain, in the wake of Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The death of Yazbaki leader Majid Arslan and ineffective leadership of his son Prince Faisal strengthened the position of Walid within Druze community. Moreover, failure of Yazbaki to elect their Shaykh al-Aql further added to the weakness of Yazbaki Druze. Thus, the Druze rallying behind the well organized Progressive Socialist Party, which has defended the Druze heartland against Phalangist advances. The Druze will continue to play important role in Lebanese politics due to their concentration in the strategic Shuf and `Aley regions and being a close knit society.

CHAPTER – III

MARONITES

ORIGINS:

The origin of Maronites can be traced back to the 4th century Syrian hermit[1], St Maron who started a religious movement in Homs, Hama and Aleppo.[2] Originally the Maronites were Monophysites who held that Jesus was entirely Divine, one person with one nature.[3] At the beginning of the Muslim invasion, the Ghassani Arabs of Syria, who were Monophysites, sided with the invading Muslims and against the authority of Byzantium. The Byzantines, in order to win back the support of the Ghassanis, offered the religious compromise of the so-called "Exposition of Faith" (ecthesis) of 638 A.D. Which had attempted to solve the logical difference by using words that would conceal them. The resulting compromise was that of Monothelitism, the doctrine that the will of Jesus was one with the Divine will. The Maronites, who were Monothelitists, were the result of that compromise between the Byzantines and the Syrian Monophysite Christians.[4] Maronites were excommunicated by the Council of constantinople of 680.[5]

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1. Herald Voke, The Lebanese War, London, 1978, p.5.
2. Bruce Borthwick, Comparative Politics of the Middle East London, 1980, p.133.
3. The Orthodox belief is that Jesus is one person with two nature, human and Divine.
4. The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam, London, 1989, p.259.
5. Hugh Wybrew, `Eastern Christianity since 451' Stewart Sutherland and others (ed), The World's Religions, London, 1988, p.190.

At the beginning of the Crusades, the Latin Church still viewed the Maronites as heretics.[6] But the Maronites welcomed the Crusaders as allies in the struggle with Islam. And in 1182 they renounced monothelitism and recognized papal supremacy.[7] But they retained their own liturgy and their own religious leader, the Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and of the whole Orient, whose residence is always in Lebanon.[8] Contact with Rome was sporadic after the Muslim reconquest of the Holy Land, completed in 1291 with the capture of Acre.[9] Moreover, there were several anti-Catholic movements among the Maronites during the three centuries which followed their union with Rome. These movements, though not ultimately successful, were widespread enough to give visiting piligrims and missionaries from Europe an unfavourable impression of the community's orthodoxy.[10] A definitive consolidation of the Union, however, did no come until the 16th century, brought about largely through the work of the Jesuit John Eliano.[11] In 1515 Pope Leo X sent to

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6. Marie-Christine Aulas, 'The Socio-Ideological Development of the Maronite community: The Emergence of the Phalanges and the Lebanese Forces', Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol.7, No.4, p.2.

7. Hugh Wybrew,op.cit., p.191 and for a deep study of Maronite community, se Moosa Matti, The Maronites in History, New York, 1936.

8. Herald Vocke, op.cit., p.5.

9. Hugh Wybrew, op.cit., p.191.

10. Kamal S.Salibi, Maronite Historians of Mediaeval Lebanon, Beirute, 1959.

11. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica,Vol.7, 15th Edictions, Chicago, 1987, p.867.

the then Maronite Patriarch, Sha'un Al-Hadathi, a bull confirming papal recognition of Maronite Orthodoxy and lauding those beleaguered Christians as examplary followers of the true faith who shone forth in the midst of infidels and bastions of error, as roses among thorns.[12] In 1584 Pope Gregory XIII founded the Maronite college in Rome, which flourished under Jesuit administration into the 20th century and became a training centre for scholars and leaders.[13] It was not until 1736, however, that the organizational sturucture of the Maronite rite as it stands today was established. In that year the convocation of the Synod at Luwayza (a monastry within the site of Beirut) corrected certain lingering irregularities in ecclesiastical practice.[14]

As mentioned earlier the origin of Maronites can be traced back to the 4th century Syrian hermit, St Maron who started a religious movement in Homs, Hama and Aleppo. However, a monk from Antioch brought the Maronites to the high valleys of northern Lebanon in the .seventh century.[15] They had a wide distribution in what are now Syria, northern Iraq and southern Turkey but with concentrations along the Orontes and at Aleppo and Urfa in the seventh century. They

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12. Robert Brenton Betts, Christians in Arab East, London, 1979, p.48.

13. The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, op.cit., p.867.

14. Robert Brenton Betts, op.cit., p.48.

15. Herald Voke, op.cit., pp4-5.

came into conflict with the Jacobites, then much stronger in the Orontes area, over the will of christ.[16] An anonymous source reports that in 659 Maronites and Jacobites brought their religious disputes and argued their cases before Mu'awiya. Renewed fueds with the Jacobites, in the second half of the seventh century, resulted in the migration of bands of Maronites to North Lebanbon, destined to become the permanent home of Maronitism.[17] The Muslim - Arab conquest further reinforced their migration when the Caliph, Umar 'Abd al-Aziz (AD 717-720) introduced thoroughgoing discrimination against Christians.[18] These harsh and inhospitable mountains of Lebanon to which Maronites migrated after Muslim,-Arab conquest helped them to fend off Muslim attempts at conquest and develop a nearly independent society and state.[19] Maronites established themselved first of all in the Batrun district, where the Patriarch Yahama Marun (d.c. 707) established his seat at Kafarhayy, and along the Qadisha (about Ali) valley, near which the earliest known Maronite Church was built at Ehden in AD749.

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16. Peter Beaumont and others, The Middle East: A Geographical Study, New York, p.374.

17. Philip K. Hitti, Lebanon in History, London, 1957, p.248.

18. Peter. Beaumont and others, op.cit., p.374. Christians were considered inferior to Muslims, therefore, they exluded from the administration, prevented from building new Churches, and required to wear distinctive dress

19. Bruce Borthwick, op.cit., p.133.

The influx of persecuted Maronite Christians from Syria into the Lebanon Mountains continued in the ninth century. The settlement of Maronites spread in this core area, then regarded as something of a Maronite holyland, because it contained only a small indigenous population and, despite its defensibility, because it possessed cultivable soils and numerous springs.[20] In 1335 the Sunni Muslim Mamluks invaded the region and dominated it for two centuries. During this period conflict broke out between the Mamluks and the Shi'a population that then inhabited the Kisrwan which did not involve the Maronites, allow them to extend their territory into the areas from which the Shi'a were expelled. By the beginning of Ottoman occupation in 1516, the Maronites represented the dominanat social group in the Kisrwan.[21] The availability of cultivable soils, numerous springs, poorly exploited resources and the remnants of the forests also attracted the Maronites to settle down in Kisrwan.[22]

Following the establishment of Emirate in 1590, Maronites began to move from northern Lebanon to southern Lebanon. Freedom and protection were extended to them by the feudal lords in the area, particularly in matters of personal safety and the exercise of religious activities. The Maronite Churches in particular started to grow and

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20 Peter Beaumont and others, op.cit., p.374.

21. Marie-Christine Aulas, op.cit., p.3.

22 Peter Beaumont and others, op.cit., p.374.

flourish under the auspices of the feudal lords. The monks and their orders cultivated the land of the feudal lords, reclaimed waste lands and purchased land of their own wherever they could.[23] In the late seventeenth century, many Maronites peasants moved further south, into the Shuf, to enter the service of Druze lords.[24] The expansion of this energetic peasantry took place throughout Mount Lebanon in the eighteenth century. They were favoured by the Ma'n and Shihab emirs not only because their higher standerd of education made some of them useful to the emirs in their administration, but also because of their proven ability to turn waste land to profit by building terraces, cultivating cereals and producing silk, for which there was a rising demand abroad. The Maronites were also helped by their own social customs.[25] Maronites also spread into the coastal plains, al Bekka and Wadi-el-Taym-a process of colonization perhaps growing from the mountain's habit of finding seasonal work on the large estates of the lower land.[26] Besides, this, the latent rivalry between the Yaman and Qays

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23. Jawaid Iqbal, 'Sectarian Strife in the Lebanon: Its Historical Roots,' International Studies, Vol.27, No.4, 1990, p.310.

24. Marie-Christine Aulas, op.cit., p.4.

25. The Maronite system of land holding was looser than that prevailing amongst other groups, especially the Druze whilst inheritance within the nuclear family, rather than the wider kin, and a ban marriage within the patrilinear group meant that they were not tied to one locality, like Muslim sharecroppers.

26. Peter Beaumont and others, op.cit., p.374.

branches of the Druze community culminated in 1711 in the battle of 'Ayn Darah, which resulted in the Yamani Druze having to flee the area for the Hawran. This development of the Druze community was of considerable benefit to Maronites, more and more of whom were entering the services of the emirs and settling within the territory of the emirate.[27] The Maronites played an indirect role in building the emirate's central power-structure through their positions as muqatajin-hereditary chieftains in possessions of fiefs. These positions were originally limited to three families-the Khazins, Hubayshes and Dahdabs-who in 1711 received from the emirs a tax concession covering a predominantly Maronite area.[28]

The late eighteenth and more especially, the nineteenth centuries saw the emergence of the Maronites on the political scene.In this the Church played a crucial role, seizing the opportunity offered by Emir Bashir II to be dealt in to the central power structure, and determining the direction of the violent events that scarred the epoch. The monks took the lead in voicing the demands of the population and in its ideological and military organization and mobilization.[29] The Maronite Church and its patriarchs

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27. The battle of 'Ayn Darah, which profoundly affected the Druze, the importance of the Maronites increased both demographically and in terms of influence. Their growing influence was clearly demostrated in 1770 by the conversion of the Shihabs to the Maronite faith.

28. Marie-Christine Aulas, op.cit., p.4.

29. Ibid., p.6.

played prominent role in shaping Lebanon's political history during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and the establishment of a christian state in Lebanon in 1920 was largely the successful culmination of their efforts.[30]

THE MARONITE CHURCH:

It was the church that preserved the community's faith, unity and identity, and gave voice to a Maronite ideology through the medium of the clergy's historiographic writings. As Meir zamir writes:

> The traditional historiography of the Maronite seems to have come into being as an expression of Maronite national pride. As a small, closely-knite community surrounded by enemies... the Maronites tended to be deeply interested in their own history, taking pride in having retained their identity through centuries of vicissitude.[31]

The clergy were the first to develop the idea of a Maronite state, claiming that Mount Lebanon had for centuries been an independent or autonomous Maronite homeland. The reign of Fakhr al-Din II[32] was portrayed as

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30. Meir Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, London, 1985,p.6.
31. Ibid., p.7.
32. Under Fakhr al-Din II (1590-1635), whose reign marked the zenith of Druze power and the establishment of the first independent Greater Lebanon, Maronite - Druze links emereged and strenthened. In addition to the Emir's privileged relations with Maronite Khazins of the Kisrwan, who had granted him refuge earlier, the Maronite-Druze rapproachement was encouraged by him. After striking up friendships with Maronite scholars during his sojourn in Tuscany (1611-1618) he appointed one of them Ibrahim Haklani, as his emissary to the Medici Court. He also encouraged Maronite settlement in Druze areas (the Matn and Shuf). The extension of Manid power to North Lebanon and the Kisrwan, enabling the Khazins to recover large areas of land settled by Shi'a in the closing years of Mamluk rule.

the high point in Lebanese history, when an independent polity covered the entire country. The autonomous existence of Maronite community and the indifference of emir in the affairs of Maronites were used as arguments intended to give historical depth to the demand for a separate Maronite entity. These arguments were later used by Lebanese Christians to counter the demands of Arab nationalists. Enshrined in the historiographic writings, all these ideas profoundly influenced the whole Maronite community. The Church dominated the educational system; generation after generation young Maronites were inculcated with these values and beliefs, which shaped their conception of themselves, their community and their surroundings.[33]

The Maronite Church's traditional organization and its poor economic status were not conducive to making it an independent and powerful social force in political scene. However, reform in the Chruch and the integration of the Maronite areas into the Emirate were favourable conditions for the growth of its prestige and power. Reorganization of Church brought about formal hierarchy and limited bribery in seeking religious positions. It also regulated and made the Church function more efficiently. These steps were aided by the education of the clergy at the Maronite college which

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33. Meir Zamir, op.cit., p.7.

Pope Gregory XIII opened in Rome in 1584.[34] Integration of Maronite areas into the Emirate had put the Maronites on an equal footing with the rest of the population in the secular system.[35]

At first, the reorganized Church remained poor and completely dependent upon the upper class 'for general support, for seats where they could carry on their religious work, and for the establishment and maintenance of new monastries. In return for these benefits, the notable clans exercised influence over the Church and secured most of the top offces for membership of their families. Thus we sea symbiotic relationship between Church and nobility and, in many cases, the Church was an institution through which the nobility could exercise influence over the peasants.[36]

When the Khazins (Maronite lord of Kisrwan) wished to encourage Maronite peasants to migrate to their fiefdom, they accomplished this through Church. They also supplied the Church with protection and influence its policies by transferring much of their lands into mortmain (non-transferable ecclesiastical possession). Non-Christian lords

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34. The Maronite clergy who returned to Lebanbon after their training at the Maronite College of Rome set up a number of schools. In 1624 Patriarch Yuhanna Makhlouf founded the first two institutions of higher education in Lebanon. In 1787 Patriarch Josheph Estephan founded the Ain Waraq Schooi (Kisrwan), also for higher educatin.

35. Odeh. J.B, Lebanon: Dynamics of conflict, London, 1985,p.30.

36. Ibid., p.30.

did not interfere with the Church but on various occasions donated land in the south of the Emirate for the building of monasteries. This was one means of attracting the much needed peasants to the south of the mountain. Return for their 'altruism' came in the form of revenues from taxes that the Church had to pay. Furthermore, Christian donor families regarded mortmains as investment and exercised property rights over them by having bishops elected from their families. A member of these clans once wrote to the Pope: 'The monastries are ours, founded by our fathers and grandfathers, and we will admit to them whomever we want to admit.... We remain obedient to the Holy see in all matters religious.[37]

THE MARONITE ORDER OF MONKS:

A significant development took place during the period which enhanced political and economic power of the clergy in the 18th and 19th centuries. Around 1700 the Maronite Order of Monks was founded as an autonomous organization within the Church.[38] The Church and Maronite order of monks worked for the general welfare of the people of the eantire sect.[39] The order was formally under the bishop, but each monastery was in fact run by its abbot. Monks were recruited from

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37. Ibid., p.30.

38. Ibid., p.30.

39. Jamal Toubi,`Social Dynamics in War Torn Lebanon', Jerusalem Quarterly, No.17, (fall, 1980), p.89.

among the peasants and they lived a communal and ascetic life. Since they did not need much to live on, they were capable of working on the land and saving money to acquire more land. Seeing how efficient these monks were, the lords began donating more non-producing lands to them. With so much lands to cultivate, the monks encouraged Maronite peasants to congregate around and work for them.[40] Thus the main economic force to emerge by the late eighteenth century was the Maronite Church. In the early stages of economic relations between the Church and the feudal lords, the interests of the two parties converged: the Church was then the weaker and dependent partner. However, as its economic strength grew, the Church was able to bear the cost of its own administration without the help of the feudal lords. This trend towards independence was further strenthened by the internal reorganization and reform of the Church.[41] The Church started opposing feudalism not only to defend the rights of the peasants but also to defeat the feudal lords, whom it now perceived as its political rivals.

Towards the end of the 18th century, the Maronite Order of Monks had become quite prosperous. Consequently, the Church and clergy started acting independently. And on many occasions the higher clergy defined the national attitude of

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40. Odeh J.B, op.cit., pp.30-31.

41. Iliya F., Harik, Politics and Change in Traditional Society: Lebanon 1711-1845, Princeton, 1969, p.280.

the Maronite people with regard to where their interest lay. For instance, in response to the French expedition in the least led by Napoleon, Patriarch Tiyyan (1796-1807) aligned his community with the French. As a Catholic the Patriarch could see in the French successes the advancement of the Maronite cause in Mt Lebanon and the East.[42] Thus the Patriarch gave orders to a Maronite shaykh to lead Maronite men to help Napoleon at acre, although the Emir of the country had adopted a policy of neutrality with regard to Napoleon and the Ottoman Vali.[43] In his attempt to ally his people with Napoleon, the Patriarch took an unusually leading role in forming and defining policy in the imarah (emirate). Traditionally this would have been a question in which the clergy had no voice at all. It was the prerogative of the Emir and the Muqati'jis to shape the attitude and define the policy of the country on such an issue. Thus, the step taken by Patriarch Tiyyan marked the beginning of a new political role for the clergy in Imarah politics.[44]

Another aspect of the pressure of economic facts on the political claims of the clergy was one which had to do with clerical property. The monks orders, which initially were conducive to the economic interests of the Muqati'jis, later

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42. Iliya F. Harik, "The Maronite Church and Political Change in Lebanon: Leonard Binder (ed) Politics in Lebanon, New York, 1966, p.49.

43. Ibid., p.50.

44. Ibid., p.49.

on proved to be inimical to the muqati'jis continued prerogatives. It was the practice in the imarah for the muqati'jis to collect taxes from the peasants, keeping a certain amount of them for himself and turning the rest over to the Emir. The monastic orders threatened the middleman's role, and obtained a decree from the Emir to the effect that the officers of the order would collect their own taxes and turn them over to the Emir, doing away with the muqati'jis economic privileges.[45]

The Church also began to encourage the oppressed peasants to revolt against the feudal privileges of their lords. Because of the social and economic functions that the Church exercised in society through its daily contacts with the people, it was capable of weilding more influence among the people than the lords did. Interests of both clergy and peasants converged against the feudal system. The clergy were capable of leading the opposition due to their organization, education and the communal alternative to the feudal system which they could offer. Thus, Bishop Istfan with other clergy supported the ammiya (commoners') revolt of 1820 against the Bashir Shihab when he tried to levy more taxes on peasants.[46]

After the conflict between Bashir II and Shaykh Bashir Jumbalat in 1824, the Maronites gave their support to Emir

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45. Ibid., p.50.

46. Odeh. J.B, Op.cit., p.31.

Bashir. Patriarch Hbaysh then assumed a position of great influence by virtue of Emir Bashir's need of him. The Patriarch mobilized his community in support of Emir Bashir, and in return the Maronites were favoured in Bashir's policies. But in 1840 the Egyptian question prejudiced this alliance and patriarch Hbaysh supported the revolt against Bashir and his Egyptian allies.[47] After the rebels success and the downfall of Bashir, the Patriarch assumed the highest position of leadership in Lebanon. He was honoured by the Ottoman governement and was invited to send a delegation to join in deliberation with the rest of the chief of the land.Most significant at this time were the Patriarch's relations with the ruling house of Shihab. The ruling Emir, Bashir III, depended to a great extent on the Patriarch, and after him the Shihabis turned to the Patriarch for instructions on matters of policy regarding the affairs of the community in the civil war. with the Druze.[48]

During Bashir III's short rule, and afterward, the Patriarch assumed political leadership among the Maronites, brought them together in a meeting, and drew up a charter of unity among them. This charter laid down his community's

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47. In 1841 the European Powers (France,Great Britain, Russia, Prussia and Austria) forced Ibrahim Pasha to withdraw his troops. The Ottomans reestablished their authority and deposed Bashir II.

48. Iliya F. Harik, op.cit., 1966, p.51.

political demands regarding the future of government in the country. It was in this charter that he threatened the iqta' (feudal) rights of the Druze muqati'jis and made a demand for a Maronite Emir of the Shihabi line to rule over Lebanon. When the 1841 civil war broke out between the Druze and the Maronites, the Patriarch assumed the role of the highest political personage in the country. He not only decided, directed, and financed the goals of the Maronite people, but his supremacy was even recognized by the Shihabi ruling family which turned to him for political and military instructions. This period marked the pinnacle of clerical influence in Mt. Lebanon. Patriarch Hbaysh continued to lead the Maronites in their internal policy and in their relations with the Ottoman government through the first phase of the Civil War until his death in 1845. The Church involvement was extensive and deep and its consequences very serious.[49]

In the peasants rising of 1858 in Kisrwan the Patriarch Mas'ad did not openly side with the peasants, he nevertheless did not heed khazin pressure. The Khazins hoped to use their traditional influence over the Church and to drawn the Patriarch to their support. But the Patriarch considered himself responsible for the peasant as as much for the Khazins, and he tried to bring about a compromise satisfactory to both sides. The Khazins, who were not

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49 Ibid., p.51.

willing to recognize the change in conditions, considered the Patriarch's partisan. The Patriarch's willingness to see a change occure in the peasants' condition and their relations with their lords encouraged the peasants in their uprising and made them look up to him for support.[50]

Thus, the Church contributed in a fundamental way to the breakdown of the iqta' system. By challenging the legitimate basis of government by a new political ideology, and by participation in political action aimed against the privileges of the ruling class, the Church struct at the very foundation of the iqta' political system.[51]

REGLEMENT ORGANIQUE:

The civil war of 1860 was a traumatic event for the Lebanese Christians when within a few weeks over 10,000 Christian in Lebanon were massacred and another 10,000 made homeless. The tragedy proved the need for an autonomous Maronite entity, which the Church had been seeking since 1840... Out of the ruin of civil war the autonomous sanjak of Mount Lebanon emerged in place of the defunct Imarah and the short lived unsuccessful 'Double qaim-muqamia regime.[52]

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50. Ibid., p.50.

51. Ibid., p.52.

52. Meir Zamir, op.cit., p.8.

The Reglement Organique of 1861[53] and its modification in 1864 provided the legal basis for the Mutasarrifiya. It made Mount Lebanon an autonomous Ottoman province, ruled by a non-Lebanese Ottoman Christian governor; the area's special status was to be guaranteed by the European powers... The Mutasarrifiya put the final seal on the Christian character of Mount Lebanon. Its territory was limited to the predominantly Christian areas and the Maronites now became numerically, politically and economically dominant.[54] However, the Reglement did not satisfy the Maronites and their Patriarch, their demand for complete autonomy under a Shihabi Maronite governor, nor did it formally recognised their supermamcy. They resented the appointment of an Ottoman governor, whom they chose to regard merely as Istambul's representative in the Mountain... The Maronites also opposed the reduction in territory from the start; it was one of the main reason the Church rejected the Reglement Organique. Maronites repeatedly called for the return of four regions which they regarded as integral parts of Lebanon: Tripoli and the

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53. The Reglement Organique of 1861 was drawn up by an international commission set up in Beirut in 1860 with representatives of the Ottoman government and of five European powers: France, England, Russia, Austria and Prussia. According to Reglement the governor of Mount Lebanon would be assisted by a 12 members administrative council or majlis (four Maronites, three Druze, two Greek Orthodox, one Greek Catholic, one Sunni and one Shi'a). This distribution for seats reflected the confessional nature of the statute and the advantage it accorded to the Christian community.

54. Meir Zamir, op.cit., pp.9-10.

district of 'Akkar in the north, the Bekka'a valley in the east; the districts of Hasbaya, Rashaya and Jubal 'Amel in the south; and in the west, the coastal towns of Tyre, Sidon and, most important of all, Beirut.... For the Maronites and their Church, the establishment of an economically viable 'Grand Liban' (Greater Lebanon) was merely a precondition for the achievement of their goal of full political autonomy and subsequent independence.[55]

Upon the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, the Lebanese Christians, in particular the Maronite, expected France to occupy Lebanon immediately and help them to realise their aspirations. During the two months between the outbreak of war in Europe and the Ottoman decision to enter the fray, Maronites openly expressed their support for France. The Maronite Church under Patriarch Hawayik had become a major political force embodying the aspirations of the Lebanese Christians; Hawayik's personal trials during war had strenthened his resolve to strive to turn Christians aspirations into fact.[56]

During the war the Lebanese emigrants groups took over the struggle for the Lebanese cause, as the inhabitants of Lebanon themselves were cut off from Europe. Syrian and Lebanese Christians emigrants in France comprised an important pressure group with some influence on French

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55. Ibid., pp. 10-15.

56. Ibid., pp.34-37.

public opinion.[57] But it was Maronites within Lebanon, under the leadership of the Patriarch and the Administrative Council, who ultimately determined the aims of the Lebanese National Movement.[58] With ,the end of the war the Maronites revived their efforts for a separate state with extended boundaries. They were afraid that, with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the wake of its defeat in the war, the Lebanon might well be incorporated into a pan-Arab Islamic State in which they would lose the autonomy they had enjoyed under the Ottomans.[59] They wanted an independent Greater Lebanon under the French protection. They sought to influence the French government and public to support their cause. Between 1918 and 1920 both the Church and the Administrative Council steadfastly persued this objective; they despatched three Lebanese delegations to Paris, whose activities became the focus of the Lebanese Christian drive to secure a state of their own.[60]

At a meeting on 13 April 1919, during a particular crucial time in the discussions over the western border of Germany, Clemenceau, the prime minister of France reached an understanding with Faisal in which he agreed to recognize

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57. Ibid., pp.47-48.

58. Ibid., p.50.

59. David R. Smock and Audry C. Smock, The Politics of Pluralism : A Comparative Study of Lebanon and Ghana, New York, 1975, p.42.

60. Meir Zamir, op.cit., p.50.

Syria's independence 'in the form of a federations of local communities', in return for Faisal's approval of a French mandate over Syria. Thus, an autonomous Lebanon was to become a part of Syria under Faisal's rule.[61]

The Maronites reacted strongly against the new French policy of rapproachment with Faisal. In mid-June 1919 Hawayik and his bishops gathered in Bkerki to deliberate on what measures to adopt in order to pressure to French government into changing its stand. During three days of talks Hawayik repeatedly emphasised that the Maronites had no choice but the continue to rely on France; only with French assistance could they attain their national goals. He informed Picot that if the complete independence of Greater Lebanon was guaranteed, the Maronites would leave it to France to determine the specific nature of future relations between Lebanon and Syria.[62]

During July, feeling were running high among the Maronites. They were disillusioned by the French policy shifts of the past few months, the visit of the American commission, the extremely negative stand taken by Faisal and the Muslims and the lack of support from the other sects convinced them that their goals were in danger of slipping out of reach.[63] In these circumstances Maronite Patriarch

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61. Ibid., p.61.

62. Ibid., p.63.

63. Ibid., pp. 69-70.

Hawayik, travelled to Paris and Versailles to plead for the creation of a separate state for the Maronite under French supervision.[64] The mission of the Patriarch proved to be the turning point in the course of events that ultimately led to the establishmnent of Greater Lebanon on 1 September 1920. Twelve years later late Shekib Arslan, and Arab nationalist and strong adversary of Hawayik, described the Patriarch as a leader '... who took in his hands the political destiny of (his) people'.[65]

With the establishment of the state of Greater Lebanon, the old practice of the interference of religious leaders and ecclesiastical bodies in Lebanon politics continued and became more competitive with the addition of two "new" actors: The Sunnis and the Shi'a. In the middle 1930's the Maronite Patriarch was at loggerheads with the French High Commissioner over the decision of the Commissioner to set up a monopoly for the cultivation of tobacco and the manufacturing of cigarettes. The primary reason for the strong opposition of the Patriarch was not the fact that the tobacco growers objected to the measure, although this must have influenced his decision, but rather that the decree abridged the rights of the various monastries which engaged in tobacco growing, thereby adversely affecting their

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64. Abdo I. Baaklini, Legislative and Political Development: Lebanon, 1842-1972. Durham, N.C, 1976, p.61. and Kamal Salibi, A House of Many Mansions: The History of Lebanon Reconsidered, London, 1988, p.26.

65. Meir Zamir, op.cit., p.70.

income. The failure of the Patriarch to achieve the repeal of this decree led him, perhaps out of spite, to side for a short time with the Muslim leaders of Syria and Lebanon in defiance of France and even to call for the termination of the mandate.[66]

ROLE OF THE CLERGY:

Since 1943 interventions by religious leaders in Lebanese politics have multiplied rather than diminished. The frequency of intervention is directly related to the strong hierarchical organization of the communities, which means that the Christian communities can interfer more effectively in view of their structure and past experience. Of these communities, the Maronites are naturally the most effective because of their relative strength and strong hierarchical organization.[67]

In 1946 Monseigneur `Aql, delegate of the Maronite Partiarchate to the Lebanese emigrants in America, presented a note to the United Nations asking its intervention for the establishment of a national home for the Christians in Lebanon. Monseigneur `Aql could not have spoken for the majority of the Christians in Lebanon since al-Diyar, which published the text of his note and was strongly critical of

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66. Yamak Zawiyya Labib, `Party Politics in the Lebanese Political System', Politics in Lebanon, (ed) Leonard Binder, New York, p.150.

67. Ibid., p.151.

its content, was published by a Greek Orthodox. But he did represent a definite point of view which sought its expression through religious media.[68]

On August 5, 1947 the Maronite Archbishop Mubarak of Beirut presented to the United Nations Conciliation Commission on Palestine a memorandum in which he declared that "Lebanon as well as Palestine should remain permanent homes for the minorities" in the Arab world, and requested the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine and a Christian state in Lebanon.[69]

The unfavourable attitude of Archbishop Mubarak towards the Arab national movement and his outspoken remarks in favour of Zionist state in Palestine provoked a great wave of popular discontent shortly after the content of his memorandum was known. Apart from some popular agitation, many editorials were published condemning the interference of the clergy in politics. Considering such action by the press as violating the constitutional rights of the Lebanese to voice their opinions freely on political matters, the Maronite Patriarch admitted the desirability of the participation of the clergy in politics on the ground that "they are citizens just like others." Many considered this statement as indirectly supporting the viewpoint of

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68. Ibid., p.151.

69. S.H Longrigg, Syria and Lebanon Under the French Mandate, London, 1958, p.352.

Archbishop Mubarak.[70]

On the eve of the elections of 1951, the Catholic hierarchy called the attention of their communicants to their duty " to participate in the elections and to elect only those candidates who have solemnly agreed to follow the directives of the ecclesiastical authorities." This incident is of great significance since it shows the extent of control that the religious institutions exercise in Lebanes politics. There is no record of how effective that directive was, but among the electorate who are tradition oriented, it is very likely that it carried much weight.[71]

A similar experience took place in 1953 shortly before the first election in which single member-constituency system rather than the list system was followed. On June 21, 1953 the Episcopal Body of the Catholic Communities meeting in Bkerki, the Seat of the Maronite Patriarch, called on the electorate to beware of the teaching of Communists and racists as well as of the theories of those who do not respect the sanctity of the family. The electorate was asked to boycott parties that attempted to destroy the independence of the country and the unity of the people, and to defeat those extremists who under the pretext of abolishing sectarianism work for the

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70. Yamak. Zawiyya. Labib, op.cit., p.151.

71. Ibid., p. 151-152.

establishment of a secular state. The significance of this statement derives from the fact that it was made at a time when political parties were openly competing for the first time for the support of the voters, and a new generation of politician was making its debut and challenging the vested interests of the traditional notables and their traditional supporters. Again , it is not possible to determine, at least statiscally, the exact influence of this statement on the voting behavior of the electorate. What we can say with some certainty is that it did influence many of those voters who lacked a strong party indentification but who were willing to vote for some specific party condidate. It might also have influenced those who feared Church action against them (for example, excommunication). Accordingly to declarations made to the press by Abdullah Saadeh, member of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and candidate for the Greeck Orthodox seat in al-Kura, the Maronite Archbishop in North Lebanon threatened his communicants in the area with excommunication if they voted for him. Perhaps many Christians were not willing to pay this terrible price for free elections. At any rate, candidate Saadeh was defeated at the polls.[72]

The Maronite Patriarch, Mgr, Paul Meouchy, the religious head of all Maronites, did not quite see eye to eye, partly because tact to Chamoun was often a matter of

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72. Ibid., p. 152.

mood. Nor was Meouchy particularly enamoured of Chamoun's domestic and foreign policies. Thus, Meouchy had from the beginning taken the side of the opposition in the hostility of 1958. On April 20,1958, before the outbreak of hostilities, he was quoted in the Lebanese press as saying that Lebanon needed new man in office so that it could resolve its differences with its neighbours, and that it was not by dividing the Lebanese against each other that the country could be saved. It was, however, Meouchy's press conference on May 30, 1958, held after the regime had complained to the Arab League and the UN Security Council of U.A.R. interference, which earned him the wrath of his own community and the praises of the opposition. He told representatives of the foreign press that the Lebanese crisis was a domestic one and should not have been taken to either the regional or the world organization, that President Abdul Nasser had given his reassurances for Lebanese independence, and that the only solution for the crisis was for the President to take a trip abroad.[73]

Reproduced widely in the Lebanese press, Meouchy's statement to the foreign correspondents helped harden the attitude of the Opposition leadership against the Chamoun regime. But at the same time there was a general agreement that the Patriarch's intention was to strenthen the

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73. Leila M.T. Meo, Lebanon:Improbable Nation, Bloomington, 1965, p.171.

Christian Character of the Opposition front and to avoid a possible sectarian war, since on the popular level the Muslims were ranged on the side of the rebels, and the Christians on the side of the regime.[74] Indeed, Meouchy's vigorous opposition to Chamoun was one of the most important single factors in preventing the 1958 Civil War from degenerating into the inter-sectarian conflict of 1975-76.

Meouchy died in 1975 on the eve of the Civil War, he was succeeded by Antoine Khraish, an uncharacteristically self-effacing, low-keyed Patriarch. Throughout the fighting, Khraish seemed visibly affected by what was befalling the country and exerted himself tirelessly but ineffectively in behind the scenes attempts at sectarian reconciliation.[75] In previous periods, Maronite Patriarchs played a cardinal role, openly or behind the scencs, in Lebanese politics. However, Khraish failed to achieve such political prominance, but when revealed, his opinions appeared moderate. On the other hand, the main Maronite monastic orders- the grassroots instiutions on which the Maronite Partiarchate and to some extent the Maronite Community are based-became unprecedentedly prominent at both the political and military levels[76] under its president, Father Sharbel Kassis upto 1980, or Father Bulus Nu`man

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74. Ibid., p.172.

75. Walid Khalidi, Conflict and Violence in Lebanon: Confrontation in the Middle East, Washington. D.C, 1979, p. 72.

76. Ibid., p.72.

since then.[77] Their Superior, Father Sharbel Kassis, a member of the quadripartite Lebanese Front was no dove. He belived in a purely "Lebanese Lebanon" and objected to its having "an Arab face." He spoke openly of the need to limit the number of Palestinians in the country. During the crisis, it was Kassis rather than the Patriarch who represented the Church in such forums as "The Maronite Summit" and the "Lebanese Front". Kassis supported the various Christians militias with money and arms. This salience of the monastic orders may reflect a shift between its base and top in the interanl balance of power within the Maronite religious hierarchy. This shift could perhaps itself have been a function of the personality of the incumbent Patriarch or it could indicate a subtly prudential division of labour betwen the two. But it could also reflect the "last ditch" Maronite mood and be yet another manifestation of the intensity of the sectarian character that the conflict had assumed.[78]

AL-KATA'IB (THE PHALANGIST PARTY):

Al-Kataib[79] al-Lubnaniya (The Lebanese Phalangist

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77. Deeb. K. Marius, `Llebanon: Prospects for National Reconciliation in the Mid-1980s' The Middle East Journal, vol. 38, No.2. (Spring, 1984), p. 280.
78. Walid Khalidi, op.cit., p.72.
79. Arabic plural of Katibah, meaning `squadron,' `regiment,' battalion,' or `phalanx'. According to LKP leaders the movement `was called Kata'ib... which means military division, for the founder wanted it to be a semi-military organization in order to instill discipline and organization into Lebanese Youths'. For the sake of uniformity and consitency Kata'ib will be used throughout as a collective and therefore in the singular.

Party) was founded on 21 November 1936 by a group of young Lebanese, prominent among them Pierre Gemayel, Charles Helou, George Naccashe, Shafiq Nasif and Emih Yared.[80] The founders were relatively young (they averaged slightly under thirty), French educated, middle class professionals (a pharmacist, lawyer, two journalists, and an engineer respectively). They had a strong commitment to an independent and Western Oriented Lebanon.[81] Pierre Gemayel, a sportsman and scouting enthusiast, had been influenced by visits to Italy and to Germany, where he had attended the 1936 Olympic Game in Berlin, coming away deeply impressed by the order and organization imposed by National Socialism.[82] He was also impressed by the Sokol movement of Czechoslovakia, a movement founded in 1862 and dedicated to the athletic, educational, and natinalistic development of Czechoslovak Youth. The influence of Europe's para-military youth organizations, however, was limited to mostly superficial adaptation-uniforms, salutes, parads, physical

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80. FMA: Arab World File, No.1426, 14 November 1979. I-L103.

81. Every one except Gemayel withdrew from the movement within three years after its formal establishement. Nasif a Beirut lawyer, was later instrumental in the creation of the Liberal Nationalist Party; Hilu, former journalist and editor of Le Jour (Beirut), was president of the republic, 1964-1970; Naccashe, co-founder and chief editorialist of the prestigious French daily, L'Orient (Beirut), remained a very close supporter of the LKP until his death in 1972; and Yared, the only non-Maronite of the group, heads a large engineering firm in Beirut and remained politically inactive.

82. FMA: Arab World File, op. cit., I-L 103.

fitness, discipline- and did not involve a complete adoption of fascist or Nazi principles. The Kata'ib in fact, along with other authoritarian `shirt' movements of the Arab east that had emerged in the 1920s and 1930s- blue and green shirts in Egypt, grey and white shirts in Syria, Khaki shirt in Iraq in response to local conditions and particularistic need: dissatisfaction with existing hierarchies of political and economic power. It was a reaction against the `cynicism' egoism and businessman's mentality of the professional "politicians"; the beginning of social awareness and a resentment of traditional elites who were dedicated to preserving their favoured postions usually achieved through open collaboration with the imperialist powers. More importantly it was the result of strictly Arab associations, the rise of Arab nationalist conciousness which sought to give meaningful identity to the Arab and his situation. This attempt was best reflected in the organization of indigenous elites dedicated to countering the rule of the colonial and mandatory powers.[83]

Besides, the founders of Kata'ib believed that Lebanon needed to be defended against the challenge of the Pan-Syrian PPS, (Syrian Social Nationalist Party) founded in November 1932, as well as against Muslim leaders who at the `Conference of the Coast' on 10 March 1936, had issued a

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83. John P. Entelis, `Party Transformation in Lebanon: Al-Kata'ib as a Case Study', Middle Eastern Studies, Vol.9, No.3, (October, 1973), p.325.

demand that parts of Lebanon be 'reintegrated' into Syria.[84] Hence the creation of the PPS by Antun Sa'adah on 16 November 1932 was a motivating force in the rise of the Kata'ib.[85] This highly organized and disciplined political party with a charismatic leadership and persuasive pan-Syrian ideology attracted widespread support both in Syria and Lebanon. As its popularity increased it posed a direct challenge to Lebanese nationalists and their concept of an independent Lebanon. Similarly the demand by many Lebanese Muslim elites for the integration into the Syrian state of the predominatly Muslim areas which had been appended to Greater Lebanon in September 1920, aroused fear and anxiety among Lebanese Christians. The Kata'ib was thus created to insure the political and territorial status quo of Lebanon according to its 1920 borders and guarantee its viability in the post-independence period.[86]

The initial aim of the Kata'ib was to instill in Lebanese youth a sense of civil responsibility and a spirit of discipline. At the same time, its motto (God, country, family) and the slogan (Lebanon first) reflected a nascent nationalism.[87] The French policies marked by extreme

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84. Gordon David C., Lebanon: The Fragemented Nation' London, 1980,p. 150.

85. See Labib Zuwiyya Yamak, The Syrian Saocial Nationalist Party: An ideological Analysis, Cambridge, 1966.

86. John P. Entelis, op cit., pp. 325-326.

87. F.M.A.: Arab World File, op. cit., I-1 103.

political and diplomatic ineptness, helped legitimize the Kata'ib in the eyes of the public as a genuine expression of Lebanese nationalist sentiment. The French favoured the pro-western orientation of the partly, but they soon realized that while Gemayel would cooperate with them, he would do so within limits. In the summer of 1937, the two clashed when a rumor spread that Tripoli was to be ceded to Syria. Consequently, the Kata'ib headquarters were seized and the party was declared to be illegal.[88]

The seizure of headquarters strengthened the Kata'ib which had hitherto beeen regarded as nothing more than a Maronite civic and athletic organization. Its confrontation with several hundred well-armed Senegalese troops on the occasion of the movement's first anniversary on 21 November 1937, in which two Phalangists were killed and eighty wounded which included Gemayel. This marked the movement's official entry into the independence struggle. It created a kind of mystique around Gemayel[89], and immeasurably strengthened the popularity and appeal of the Kata'ib movement.

The Kata'ib in cooperation with Muslim Youth Movement, al-Najjadah took initiative against Mandatory power when French military authorities under the newly-designated

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88. Gordon David. C., op. cit., p. 150.

89. Michael C. Hudson, The Precarious Republic: Political Modernization in Lebanon , New York, 1968, p. 143.

Delegue-General, Jean Helleu, arrested the government of Bisharah al-kuri on 11 November 1943.[90] The Kata'ib was officially recognized on 27 November 1943, five days after Lebanon had achieved its independence.[91] The Party's primary preoccupation was to preserve the territorial integrity, and political sovereignty of an independent Lebanon. Thus Kata'ib became the defender of territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon. At the time of the 1958 crisis, the Kata'ib sided with Camille Chamoun against the predominantly Muslim Nasserite leaders of insurrection. After the formation of the UAR (Syrian-Egyptian union, 1 February 1958), the party criticised those in Lebanon who supported the principle of union and warned against `Nasser's designs' on the country. The phalangist militia were involved in armed clashes which went on for five months.[92]

Gemayel, initially regarded the Palestinian commandos as a possible protection against the Communist, especially against the Ba`thists from Syria and therefore acquiesced to their presence in Lebanon. He changed his position as the PLO shifted to the left after 1967 and drifted ideologically speaking closer to the Lebanese Socialists and Nasserite Nationalists, as well as Marxists, all of whom

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90. John P. Entelis, op. cit., p. 326.

91. Ibid., p. 326.

92. FMA, Arab World File, No. 1431, 21 November 1979, I-L 104.

were demanding a change in the situation in Lebanon.[93] Whereas the Kata'ib wanted to maintain the status quo which ensures the political dominance of Christians. Thus, the Kata'ib fully supported the Lebanese army in 1969 and 1973 in its confrontation with the Palestinians.[94] It was Kata'ib which took initiative in unleashing Civil War in 1975 when its member shot dead many Palestenian in Ayn al-Rumanna.[95] The Kata'ib opposes any amendment of the constitution, although it supported secularization of the state. Throughout war it was the Kata'ib which played the leading military role. The Kata'ib always believed in status quo in Lebanon to maintain Christian dominance.

Maronites, who were brought to Mount Lebanon by John Maron in the seventh century are today the second largest sect. They emerged on the political scene of Lebanon at the close of eighteenth century and more exactly in the beginning of nineteenth century. In this process the Church played a crucial role. The Maronite Church and its Patriarch took an active part in shaping Lebanon"s political history and the establishment of a Christian state in Lebanon in 1920. They were the first to develop the idea of a Maronite state, claiming that Mount Lebanon had for centuries been

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93. Kemal Karpat H.,(ed) Political and Social thought in the Contemporary Middle East, New York, 1982, p. 79.

94. Gordon David C., op. cit., p. 152.

95. John Bulloch, Death of a Country, London, 1977, p. 38. and Kamal S. Salibi, Crossroads to Civil War: Lebanon 1958-1976, New York, 1976, p. 98.

an independent or autonomous Maronite homeland. With the establishment of a state of Greater Lebanon in 1920, the old practice of the interference by the religious leaders and ecclesiastical bodies in Lebanese politics continued and became more competitive with the addition of two new actors: the Sunnis and the Shi`a.

In 1946 Monseigneur` Aql, delegate of the Maronite Patriarchate to the Lebanese emigrants in America, presented a note to the United Nations requesting its intervention for the establishment of a `national home' for the Chrishtins in Lebanon. On the eve of the elections of 1951, the Catholic hierarchy called the attention of their followers to their duty "to participate in the elections and to elect only those candidate who have solemnly agreed to follow the directive of ecclesiastical authorities." In 1953 Episcopal Body of the Catholic communities warned the electorates to beware of the communists and the racists. They were asked to boycott parties that attempted to destroy the independence of the country its unity, and to defeat those extremists who under the pretext of abolishing sectarianism worked for the establishment of a secular state. In 1958 Maronite Patriarch oppossed the constitutional amendment to facilitate the re-election of President Chamoun. His action strenthened the Christian character of the opposition front and avoided a possible sectarian war. The Maronite Patriarch, Antoine Khraish failed to achieve the political

prominance of his predecessor Meouchy during the civil war which started in 1975. However, the Maronite monastic orders became unprecedently prominent at both the political and military levels. And Father Sharbel Kassis spoke openly of the need to limit the number of Palestinians in Lebanon. He believed in a purely "Lebanese Lebanon" and objected to its having" an Arab face". Moreover, he supported the various Christian militias with money and arms. Thus, the Maronite religious leaders continued to play determined role in the Lebanese politics and influence the course of development there.

CHAPTER – IV

THE SUNNIS

ORIGINS:

The Sunnis[1] probably constitute 26 percent of the Lebanese population.[2] The majority of Sunni Muslims live in three major cities: Beirut, Tripoli and Sidon.[3] However, some Sunnis live in villages in `Akkar, the Bekka, the Shuf, and the South.[4] Riyad Sulh, a pan-Arab Sunni leader,was a major party to 1943 National Pact, which provided the basis for Lebanon's independence from the French in 1943.[5] The National Pact also established critical confessional distribution of power in the country and were awarded the second most important political post in the state hierarchy: the prime ministership. The sunnis are basically an urban community that profited from the pre-war economic prosperity. They have been regarded with suspicion by

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1. The Sunni Muslims are named after the Sunnah, (followers of Sunnah) or the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad and his immediate successors. They believe that Muhammad's successor, or caliphs, were either elected by the whole Muslim community or were nominated by their predessors.

2. This figure is a 1983 confidential U.S. State Department estimate cited in Michael C. Hudson, 'The Breakdown of Democracy in Lebanon, Journal of International Affairs, (Winter, 1985), p.281,

3. Yahya Armajani and M. Thomas Ricks, Middle East Past and Present, New Jersey, 1986, p.292.

4. As'ad Abu Khalil, 'Druze, Sunni and Shiite Political Leadership in Present Day Lebanon', Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol.7, No.4, 1985, p.35

5. Walid Khalidi, Conflict and Violence in Lebanon: Confrontation in the Middle East,Cambridge,1983, p.36.

Lebanese Shi`a for their perceived insensitivities towards Shi`a grievances. The Sunnis, especially those of Beirut, were known to be well-off financially compared with other, poor communities, such as the Shi`a. Many could afford to own two houses, one in the city and another in the mountains for the summer. Today, where the Shi`a-Sunni conflict is at its peak in Lebanon, the Shi`as refer to the Sunni as argilah (water-pipe or hookah) to denate their past ease and relaxation of which the Shi`a have been deprived.[6]

Lebanon's Sunni community is of comparatively recent development. Mamluk persecution of the Shi`as and Christians following the final expulsion of the Crusaders led to conversions in areas along the main lines of communication through the coastal plain and `Akkar. Some Druze and Shi`a community in al-Bekka, Wadi al-Taym and Shuf also practised taqiya for such a long time during Sunni domination that they ceased to make the necessary mental reservation. However, the introduction of Turkoman and Kurdish nomads during the fourteenth century accounts for the Sunni predominance in `Akkar as well as for some of the groups in al-Bekka. The Sunni element in al-Bekka was also increased by the voluntary sendentarization of some bedouin groups. Finally, the predominance of Sunni governments from 1291 to 1918 saw the establishment and reinforcement of loyal coreligionist administrators in the important coastal

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6. As'ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., 1985, p.35

towns. These were augmented from the seventeenth century ownwards by numbers of Sunni merchants attracted by the rising prosperity of the Lebanese seaboard based on its western contracts.[7]

According to Yahya Armajani Sunni Muslims are the most prosperous[8] community of Lebanon. They occupy most of the professions and trades. There is a large stratum of peasants and workers, a small middle class of merchants and professionals, as well as a small upper class who own large tracts of agricultural land and urban real estate and business.[9] But as compared to Maronites Christians in general, the sunnis are an economically less-advanced subnational group who, rightly or wrongly, blame their current status on the policies of Lebanon's wetern-oriented, predominantly Christian elite.[10] Thus, as a rule

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7. Beaumont Peter and others, The Middle East: A Geographical Study, New York, 1978, p.375
8. Yahya Armajani and M. Thomas Ricks, op.cit., p.291
9. Bruce Borthwick, Comparative Politics of Middle East, London, 1980. p.136.
10. John P. Entetis, 'Ethnic Conflict and the Reemergence of Radical Christian Nationalism in Lebanon', Religion and Politics in the Middle East, Colorado, 1981, p.233. In a study carried out in 1976 on the economic status of the Lebanese social groups according to sectarian affiliation sustains what has been a socio-economic fact since the 1920s: Christians are wealthier, more educated, better clothed and housed, and in more prestigious occupations than the Muslims. Joseph Chamic writes: "with whatever reasonable criteria one chooses to utilize, the social and economic differentials between the religious groups are unmistakably clear: non-Catholic Christians and Catholic at the top, Druze around the middle, Sunnis near the bottom, and Shi'a at the very bottom". Joseph Chamie, 'The Lebanese Civil War: An Investigation into the Causes', World Affairs, Vol. 139, No.3, (Winter, 1976-77), p.180.

Sunnis are not as well educated as Christians.[11]

In the modern Lebanese republic, as in the former Ottoman empire, the Lebanese Sunnis always regarded themselves, before anything else, as members of the world wide community of Sunni Muslims; and in their view this meant that they belonged to the largest and only orthodox religious community within Islam. In the Lebanese uplands, which were originally occupied by Maronites and Druzes, Sunni influence is not so strong. There are close links of kinship between them and many Sunni families in neighbouring Syria, especially in Damascus.[12] They are divided into different clans. There is a religious oganization of the Sunnis under the leadership of the mufti of Lebanon. True to Sunni tradition, the religious leaders do not involve themselves in politics. However, they are not without influence.[13]

SUNNI MUSLIMS AND THE CREATION OF GREATER LEBANON:

The Sunni very much resented to the creation of "Grand Liban" by the French because it accompanied the demise of an independent Arab Kingdom in Arabia, Iraq, and Greater Syria in which they were the overwhelming majority. Furthermore, they were cut off from their coreligioni sts in Syria and the rest of the Arab World, thereby becoming a minority

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11. Bruce Borthwick, op.cit., p.136.

12. Herald Vocke, The Lebanese War, London 1978,p.6.

13. Yahya Armajani and M. Thomas Ricks, op.cit., p.292.

group in the new Lebanese state. Also they were ruled by the French and the Maronites, both Christians. This violated the traditional view of the Muslim jurists that government should be in the hands of Muslims.[14]

The incorporation of Sunnis in Lebanon involved a grave religious, cultural, political and economic crisis and a powerful emotional blow. For the first time in their history they were a minority in a Christian dominated state. The other factors contributing to their hostile attitude were considerations of religious beliefs and culture. However, the more immediate problems involved their position in the new state.[15] Due to many reasons the Sunnis in Lebanon could never fully identify with the Lebanese state set up and guaranteed by a foreign Christian power. It was regarded as a challenge to their entity. Their religious and emotional crisis was compounded by the practical difficulties of defining their status in the state. Unlike the other sects in Lebanon, the Sunnis had never constituted a separate religious community. They were integral part of the Sunni Ottoman Empire. Now they feared that in state closely linked to Imperial France, which was known for its tendency to impose its culture and language on its

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14. Bruce Borthwick, op.cit., p.136.

15. Some Sunni writers argued that Islam sees no separation between religion and state; it thus leaves little room for loyalty to a secular state, and certainly not to a Christian one. For Muslims, the role of the state is to implement and defend the Shari'a (religious law).

colonies, their own Arab Muslims culture would suffer discrimination. The missionary orders, in particular the French ones, would now have a free hand to persue their religious and educational activities. They might even try to convert Muslims to Christianity. The Sunnis thus became extremely vigilant in defendidng their culture and language.[16]

In fact the loss of their former political pre-eminance was an important reason for the negative sunni attitude towards the Lebanese state. As mentioned above, the Lebanese sunnis had held priviledged and influential positions alongside the Turks in the administration of the Ottoman Empire. And their feelings of supremacy were reinforced by religious belief. Notables such as Salam and Bayhum had not only played prominent roles in the administration of the vilayat of Beirut; as members of the Ottoman parliament, they had felt involved in the affairs of the entire empire. Now their activities were restricted to the limited area of Lebanon, and even here they were being pushed aside by the Christian bourgeosie whom they had regarded as their inferiors. Their sense of under-representation in the political institutions and administration of the Lebanese state was one of their main grievances throughout the mandate period and even in independent Lebanon. Hence it was among the traditional sunni notables of Beirut, Tripoli and

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16. Meir Zamir, The Formation of Modern Lebanon, London, 1985,pp. 126-127.

Sidon that the main opposition to the Lebanese state arose; it was they who determined the negative attitude of their community towards Lebanon during 1920's and early 1930's.[17]

The sunni rejection of the Lebanese state also reflectd a concern over the economic consequences of separation from the rest of Syria, a concern that was shared by many Christians in the annexed areas. The coastal cities and the Bekka had close economic ties with the interior. Sunni merchants and financiers in Beirut and Tripoli, from whose ranks the community's poltical elite were largely drawn, were middlemen in the overseas trade of the interior. They feared that separation from the hinterland would seriously undermine their econmic interests. The economic factor helps explain why sunni attitudes in Beirut began to diverge from those in Tripoli during 1930's. True, some of these difficulties can be attributed to geography and demography: Beirut was farther removed from the rest of Syria, and the sunnis there constituted only a minority of the total population. But in the early years of the mandate the sunni notables in Beirut were just as opposed to the Lebanese state as their co-religionists in the north. It was only following the rapid economic growth of the town that they adopted a more moderate stand, while Tripoli, badly affected by its annexation to Lebanon, remained a militant anti-Lebanese centre throu[redacted]t the mandate.[18]

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17. Ibid., p. 127.
18. Ibid., pp. 127-128.

The inquality in taxation rate between Mount Lebanon and the annexed areas was another important source of discontent. Among the few steps that could indeed have been taken to weaken sunni opposition to annexation would have been to reduce tax rates to the low level enjoyed by the inhabitants of the Mountain. But the previous tax rates were kept in force, while the inhabitants of Mount Lebanon opposed every French attempt to cancel their privileges. It took nearly 20 years for the tax systems of the two regions to be unified. This inequality roused frequent protests from the Muslims of the annexed areas, who complained that they were being exploited by the Maronites in the Mountain to finance the national budget, disproportionate part of which was spent in Mount Lebanon.[19]

The political attitude adopted by the Christian ruling classes towards the Sunnis further increased their fear of becoming an inferior minority in the state. Having been under Muslim domination for centuries, the Christians intended to take full advantage of the prominent positions they now enjoyed. They were never tired of repeating that Lebanon was their country, and they often adopted an offensive and even contemptuous attitude towards Muslims. For example, provocative articles against the Muslims frequently appeared in Christian newspapers, and the anniversary of the battle of Maisalum, which represented a

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19. Ibid., p. 128.

humiliating defeat for the Muslims and the loss of their independence, was celebrated enthusiastically by some Christian.[20]

Moreover, Lebanese Christian, anxious to dissociate themselves from Arabism and its Islamic connections, were pleased to be told that their country was the legitimate heir to the Phoenician tradition. Christian writers like the poets Charles Corm (writing in French, d.1963) and Said Aql (writing in Arabic), tried hard to build up the Phoenicianist image of Lebanon.[21]

Sunni resentment of the French mandate was a major cause for their opposition to the Lebanese state. After the events of 1920 they regarded France more than ever before as their enemy. The French mandate, they believed, was a form of foreign rule imposed by force and that Lebanon itself had became a permanent foothold for French domination over all of Syria. Thus they saw the French presence as a guarantee of Christian supremacy, and they feared that even if French eventually evacuated Syria, it would still remain in Lebanon and continue to use its influence in favour of the Christian.[22]

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20. Ibid., p. 128.

21. Kamal. S. Salibi, 'The Lebanese Identity,' Religion and Politics in the Middle East (ed) Michael Curtis, Colorado, 1981, p. 223.

22. Meir Zamir, op.cit., pp. 128-129.

For the above mentioned reasons sunni Muslims living in Lebanon saw integration into Syria as the best way to avoid Maronite ambitions. From late 1918 to mid 1920, they looked to Arab authorities in Damascus for help in avoiding a Christian-dominated state. Even after the French conquered Syria and created Greater Lebanon, Damascus remained the focal point of sunni oppositon. But by the 1940's sunni Muslims of Lebanon no longer looked to Syria; the willingness of Syrian leaders to compromise on Lebanon compelled the Lebanese sunnis to come to terms with an independent Lebanon.[23]

Sunni opposition to annexation by the Maronites of Lebanon took several forms. Led by residents of Beirut and Tripoli, sunni flooded the League of Nations and French offices in Beirut and Paris with memorials, petitions, and telegrams. Demonstrations in the city streets occurred regularly. Increased mosque attendance, greater celebration of Islamic holidays, and other religious acts strenthened the spirit of communal solidarity. The sunnis' efforts to secede from Lebanon became more organized in 1923, as their leaders combined efforts to petition the French and send emissaries to Europe. They also paid greater attention to winning Greek Orthodox Christians to the secessionist point of view.[24]

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23. Daniel Pipes, 'Damascus and the Claim to Lebanon,' ORBIS, (Winter, 1987), p.667.

24. Ibid., p. 667.

The Druze revolt in Syria in 1925-27 fuelled Sunni impatience with their place in Lebanon. "From the end of 1925 until the summer of 1926", writes Meir Zamir, a wave of intensive pro-Syrian activity, unprecedented since 1920, spread throughout the coastal area. Petitions were sent to the High Commission, the French government and the League of Nations, commercial strikes were organized, numerous meetings of notables and leaders were held and articles supporting union with Syria were published in the Muslim Press.[25] Sunni leaders carried petitions to the French authorities calling for union with Damascus. They also organised into committees to orchestrate unionist sentiments, to coordinate with the rebels in Syria, and to communicate with the Executive Committee of the Syro-Palestine Congress.

The prospect of a Franco-Syrian accord in 1936 inspired fresh activism among Lebanese Muslims. The Sunnis of Tripoli petitioned the League of Nations, requesting that their region, previously incorported into Lebanon "without their agreement or consent... be annexed to United Syria". At a conference of the Coast in March 1936, Muslim leaders from Lebanon and Syria met with members of the Syrian Social Nationlist Party to demand that the areas added to Lebanon in 1920 be returned to Syria. The eventual signing of a Franco-Syrian protocol in September 1936[26] provoked the

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25. Meir Zamir, op.cit., p. 182.

26. Kamal S.Salibi, The Modern History of Lebanon, 1965, p.181.

Sunni Muslims of Tripoli to riot and strike to demand incorporation in Syria. When the Lebanese president visited Tripoli four days after the signing, he was greeted by crowds of children and youths who shouted slogans in favour of unity with Syria. They refused to obey police orders and ended their welcome in a stone-throwing fracus with the police.[27]

In the beginning the Sunnis were reluctant to participate in the political process of Lebanon. An organized Sunni opposition was manifested in the summer of 1921, when preparation were being made for the census as a first steps towards a general election . The Sunni refused to participate in the census on the grounds that they were being defined as citizens of "Greater Lebanon", and that this could be interpreted as their recognition of the Lebanese state. In August a delegation of Sunni notables from Beirut,including Salam, Da'uq and Bayhum met with Gouraud to express their objections to the census and to French favouritism towards the Christians in the Lebanese administration.[28] The Sunnis also withdrew from the constitutional consultations[29] which began in early 1926

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27. Daniel Pipes, op.cit., pp. 668-669.
28. Meir Zamir, op.cit., p.190.
29. Sunni Muslims all over the Lebanon refused to take part in the Drafting of the Constitution. They made it clear to the French authorities that they did not support a Lebanese republic that was separate from and independent of Syria. Of the 210 representatives of the different communities to whom the Drafting Committee sent out copies of a questionnaire in order to ascertain their views, only 132 replied, and most of those who refused to reply were Sunni Mulims.

fearing that constitution for Lebanon will endowed a new permanency to the Lebanese polity.[30] By middle thirties, the Sunnis did not participate in the political life of the state. Like the other communities, the Sunnis too had their participation in the judiciary, legislative, and administrative branches of the government, but this gave more satisfaction to the office holders than to the sect as a whole. It yearned for reattachment to predominantly Sunni Syria and for a return of the prestige it had enjoyed under the Ottomans.[31]

Only in the late 1930s and 1940s, with the rise to power of a young generation of Sunni leaders who had grown up under the new Lebanese political system, was the way opened to a modus vivendi between these leaders and their Christian counterparts.[32] The sunnis were the first to accept the status quo, as economic success caushioned their political disappointment.[33] As early as 1926, Muhammad al-Jisr, a prominent Sunni man of learning from Tripoli, had defied the Sunni boycott of the Lebanese state by agreeing

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30. Daniel Pipes, op.cit., p. 668.

31. Leila M.T. Meo,Lebanon: Improbable Nation, Bloomington, 1965, p.74.

32. Meir Zamir, op.cit., p. 127.

33. Daniel Pipes, op.cit., p. 668.

to serve until 1932 as speaker of parliament.[34] In 1937, another Sunni from Tripoli, Khayr al-Din al-Ahdab, who had gained prominence in Beirut as an Arab nationalist jounalist, again defied the same Sunnis boycott by accepting the premiership of the Lebanese cabinet.[35] However, the effort of the Lebanese Sunni for the integration with Syria ended, when they reached an agreement on dividing power with the Christians in 1943. By the terms of their informal agreement, known as the National Pact, Lebanese Sunnis accepted separation from Syria on condition that the Christians turn their back on France and accept Lebanon's Arab identity. Few Sunnis actively sought union with Syria after 1943.[36]

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34. In 1932 the mandatory suspended the constitution, dissolved the Chamber and the Cabinet, and instituted an authoritarian regime , all because Shaykh Mohammad al-Jisr insisted on announcing his candidacy in the forthcoming presidential elections and stood a good chance of winning. Al-Jisr's chances of electrion at that time derived from the fact that the Chamber, whose duty it was to elect the President, was very much divided as to which of the probable Maronite candidates to elect. Should Edde announce his candidacy, he could not count on the votes of the supporters of al-Khoury, who was himself determined to become a candidate. There were also other Maronites with presidential ambitions, and when election day came one of the hopefuls was sure to emerge as the French-approved candidate. Factional rivalry and an unwillingness to elect the "official" candidate, for fear that he would become a tool in the hands of the mandatory, decided many a Christian deputy to support the candidacy of al-Jisr. The dissolution of the Chamber, however, robbed them of this chance.

35. Kamal Salibi, A House of Many Mansions, London, 1988, p.183.

36. Daniel Pipes, op.cit., p.669.

THE SUNNI LEADERSHIP:

The Sunni community suffers today from numerous problems and difficulties. It lacks the coherent political organisations (coherent in the Lebanese war's relative terms, of course) of the Druze, Shi'a and Maronites. It also lacks a charismatic leader behind whom Sunnis could rally. Furthermore, the regional particularist tendencies of the Sunnis appear to be greater than they are among other communities. The Sunnis have no political organisation that appeals to the members of the community wherever they are in Lebanon: What exist of Sunni-based political orgnisations are confined to individual districts, cities, often even to one hayy (neighbourhood). Thus it is impossible to examine the Sunni political leadership without introducing some geographic distinctions. Not only are the Sunnis today politically weak, but they are regarded by their Muslim coreligionists with much suspicion and dissatisfaction due to the Sunnis' stake in the Naional Pact. As a result of that deal, the Sunnis were recognized by the Maronite political leadership as an integral but inferior part of the Lebanese political system. The Shi'a, who were virtually ignored by the arrangement, blame the Sunnis for their arrogance and "collaboration".... As already mentioned, the Lebanese state under the French mandate co-opted the Sunni 'ulama' by creating Dar al-Ifta' (the highest Sunni religious body) as part of the Lebanese bureaucracy. The

Sunni Shaykhs are thus civil servants who receive their salaries from the state itself. This accounts for the conservative role always played by the Sunni religious elite.[37]

The political power of the traditional Sunni leaders was based largely on 'ascriptive status' and not on traditional tribal or clan loyalties or on geographically concentrated rural constituencies enjoyed by other communities such as the Druze, Shi'a or Maronite leaders. The erosion of the political power of the traditional Sunni leaders was caused partly by these politicians' inability to satisfy the growing demands of their followers for job opportunities and political reforms and partly because of the strong reformist appeal of the National Movement[38] and the Palestinian Resistance Movement. This was combined with a high level of personal estrangement among the leading members of the Lebanese oligarchy in general even before the Civil War of 1975. To forestall a further erosion of their

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37. As'ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., pp. 35-36. Even the Sunni Muslims Brotherhood of Lebanon has been consistently pro-saudi.

38. National Movement was a coalition of radical and leftist parties organized by Kamal Junbalat in 1969. The Movement pressed for the deconfessionalization of the system. The National Movement never went so far as to call for the overthrow of the regime. The Movement's "Programme for Political Reforms", was concerned with internal reforms that did not include radical changes. Kamal assassination in 1977 led to the gradual dismantling of the National Movement, which was completed by the summer of 1982, and its remnants have since been completely subordinated to the Syrian regime.

political position the Sunni oligarchs concentrated on Christian - Muslim sectarian cleavages, blaming the ills of the political system on the Maronite 'monopoly' of power. Consequently the traditional Sunni leadership was not in a position to cooperate with the Christians lest this cooperation lead to further defections of followers to the National Movement. Given the pivotal role of an effective working rapport between the Maronite president and the Sunni prime minister, this estrangement among the members of the Lebanese ruling elite was a crippling blow to the continued functioning of the government.[39]

The traditional Sunni leadership is weaker today than it was in the late seventies in the aftermath of the Lebanese civil war. Following that phase of the Civil war, the sunnis were disillusioned with the Palestinia Resistence Movement and its Lebanese leftist-led allies. The attitude adopted by the movements alienated the sunnis and other groups of the population in areas under PLO-Lebanese National Movement control. Furthermore, the scale of the war and the subsequent destruction of cities and villages were far beyond what Beirut's sunnis had anticipated. The traditional Sunni leadership exploited and benefited from these negative factors, and expressed deep interest in returning to the status quo ante. The famous Lebanese

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39. Edward E. Azar and others, The Emergence of a New Lebanon:Fantasy or Reality? New York, 1984, p. 122.

leader Sa'ib Salam in Beirut and Rashid Karami[40] in Tripoli re-emerged as the spokesmen of their community. Al-Tajamma'al-Islam (`the Islami Bloc'), a "club" which included all the prominent Sunni politicians. It assumed a greater role and, to a large extent, represented the popular mood and tendencies of the sunni community as a result of the drift in public orientation away from the Lebanese left and the Palestinian resistence movements.[41]

However, some Sunni regional leaders openly supported the Israeli invasion and Bashir Gemayel after 1982. Faruq Shihab al-Din, a key Sunni leader of the Bastah district of West Beirut, headed a large delegation from Beirut to congratulate Bashir upon his election. Likewise, Labib Abu Dhahr, a prominent bourgeois from Sidon, founded a small bloc to mobilize supporters of Israel in that city. But the provocative and oppressive practices of the Gemayel government soon shattered the hopes of "optimistic" Sunnis who sincerely expected the return of pre-war Lebanon.[42]

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40. Rashid Karami was born in Miriata (North Lebanon) on 30, December 1921. He came from a prominent Sunni family. His father had been mufti, member of parliament and , prime minister. He elected Deputy for Tripoli in 1951, a seat he kept in all subsequent elections. Justice minister in 1951-52, he then joined the opposition which was to bring the downfall of President Bishara al-Kouri in 1952. Several times minister between 1953 and 1955, on 19 September 1955, at the age of 34, he became Lebanon's youngest prime minister, however, he resigned on 19 march 1956. He became prime minster many times till his death on 1 June 1987.

41. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p. 37.

42. Ibid., pp. 37-38.

There is a sizeable Sunni population in Beirut in its second and third electoral constituencies. The traditional Sunni leadership there include, among its most prominent members, the former Primer Minister: Sa,ib Salam, Taqiy al-Din al Sulh, Rashid al-Sulh, Shafiq al-Wazzan and Salim al-Huss.[43] The old Sunni political establishment lost much of its credibility as a result of its close "collaboration" with the Maronite leadership after the invasion, within a state that most Muslims rightly perceived as Phalangist domain. Shafiq al-Wazzan, for example, headed government under the presidencies of both Ilyas Sarkis and Amin Gemayel, despite their adopting policies unacceptable to Muslims. Both president, Sunnis argue, proved to be heavily inclined towards Maronite sectarianism. Sa'ib Salam also supported both administrations and personally lobbied for the parliament's passage of the May 17, 1983 agreement with Israel. Some Sunni traditional leaders, like 'Uthman al-Dana of Beirut and Sulayman al-Ali of 'Akkar openly' aligned themselves with the Lebanese Forces and Bashir Gemayel personally.[44] Only one man among the group of former prime minister appears to enjoy the support of the Sunni community as an honest and strong leader who stood up to the "Christian fanatic" Sarkis. The Phalangists harsh attacks on

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43. Marius K. Deeb,`Lebanon: Prospects for National Reconciliation in the Mid-1980's, The Middle East Journal, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Spring, 1984), p. 273

44. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p. 38.

al-Huss as a fanatic Sunni boosted his Muslim credibility. However, al-Huss has not organized his followers into a political party with a military arm, a crucial condition for the institutionlization and mobilization, and consequently the continuity, of public support. Al -Huss is also one of the few Sunni leaders who has consistently maintained good relations with other Muslim organisations, particularly non-Sunni groups, as well as with Syria.[45]

The second important concentration of Sunni leaders is in the predominantly Sunni city of Tripoli. Rashid Karame, ex-prime minister, has been an important traditional leader in Tripoli who has been categorized as one of the aqtab[46], regained his power after law and order were re-established in Tripoli and various militias were disarmed. Although Karame was hemmed in by important rivals in the city, Deputy Abd al-Majid al-Rafi'i is one of them. He is the secretary General of the pro-Iraqi Arab Baath Sociolist Party, a physician by profession, who comes from one of the most prominent clans of the city, and who is the newphew of a former speakere of the House, Shaykh Muhammad al-Jisr.[47]

Two other regions with high concentrations of Sunnis are the city of Sidon and the Iqlim al-Kharrub, whose Sunnis

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45. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

46. Prominent Lebanese leaders who were able to bring deputies to parliament on the electoral lists or as members of their parties or blocs known as political bosses or poles (aqtab) in Lebanon.

47. Marius K. Deeb, op.cit., p.274.

constitute one fifth of the total population of the Shuf Qada.[48] Over the past few decades, the political leadership of Sidon has been dominated by a tug of war. The leadership of the Sunni community has been shared by two rivals, the al-Bizri family, and Ma'ruf Sa'd (and later his sons). The al-Bizris are a large landowning family who were able to have their representative. Nizih al-Bizri, elected to the parliament in the last election that of 1972.. Al-Bizri became less popular, since he lacked a political organisation and a militia.[49] With Israel's defeat of the PLO and the disbanding of the Lebanese National Movement, Bizri and other traditional leaders re-emerged as the dominant groups in the region.[50] Their rival, Ma'ruf Sa'd was a popular and charismatic street leader who founded the Nasserite Popular Organization.[51] The assassination of Sa'd

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48. Ibid., p.274.
49. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p.42.
50. Marius K. Deeb, op.cit., p.274.
51. The Nasserite Popular Organization drew its inspiration from Nasserism which had held sway over the Arab after the Suez Crisis. Nasserism was the Political and social attitude of Arabs in many countries who regarded Gamal `Abdul Nasser as the leader of all Arabs, and republican Egypt as the prototype of nation progressing towards national freedom and social justice. Nasserism was neither a well-defined indeology nor an organized movement; it was a general political-emotinal outlook, which took its inspiration from the personality, actions and utterances of the late Egyptian persident. It was for some years the most popular force in the Arab world. It developed against the background of disillusionment with other ideologies and the poor performance of previous Arab leaders. But it had, since 1961-62, acquired a more doctrinal appearnance. To its nationalism, anti-Western neutralism and reformism, socialism was now added. For details of Nasserism See, Hrair R. Dekmejian, Egypt Under Nasir, London, 1972.

in 1975 is considered by many the Sarajevo of the Lebanese Civil War. The leadership of the Nasserite Popular Organization was then assumed by Ma'ruf's son Mustafa. Mustafa proved to be an able city leader, and gained the support of his community. He is most remembered for his leadership of the spectacular battle with the Syrian army in 1976, which left a Syrian tank on top of a building in Sidon.[52] Since Mustafa Sa'd was blinded in a January 1985 car-bombing attack that also took the life of his daughter, his brother Usamah has assumed day-to-day leadership of the Popular Nasserite Organization. Mustafa has remained the overall leader. A militia grouping created by Sa'd played an important role in defeating the Lebanese Forces in the villages east of Sidon in April 1985.[53]

Another group of Sunni leaders are the traditional leaders of Akkar, notably, the feudal clan of al-Mir'abi. Sulayman al-Ali and Talal al-Mir'abi are the members of the clan who have seats in parliament and are most active politically. The leftist, peasant based movement which challenged their power in the late 1960s and early 1970s spent its force, and the recent emergence of Muslim fundamentalist groups in Akkar has not yet affected their power base.[54]

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52. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p.42.

53. Augustus Richard Norton, Amal and the Shia: Struggle for the Soul of Lebanon, Austin, 1987, p.137.

54. Marius K. Deeb, op.cit., p.274.

In all other regions, the Sunni community is either small or dominated by clans of other sects. For example, the small Sunni minority in Baalbek is under the influence of the militant Shi`a of the region, while that of Marjayun comes under the leadership of Kamil al-As'ad. The important Sunni minority of the southern Bekka is divided between an Israeli-occupied and a Syrian-controlled region, and the traditional Sunni clan of al-Qadiri is caught in between.[55]

The sunni political and religious leadership is, in many ways, a product of the larger Sunni community. The Sunni attitude towards the Lebanese Civil War has always been ambivalent. On the one hand, the Sunnis were part of the larger Muslim community that had been expressing its resentment with respect to the basic social and political and indeed sectarian - injustices in Lebanon. However, while the Sunni were critical of certain aspects of the political system, they were not against the system per se.[56] In some areas, the Sunnis such as Beirut, profited from the prosperity of the Lebanese economy and were reluctant to demand radical changes in the system. The conservative Sunni attitude towards the political system can best be summed up by Sa'ib Salam's famour slogan: thawrah min fawq (`revolution from above'), which contrasted sharply with

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55. Ibid., p. 275.

56. The Sunnis always called for a musharakah (an equitable distribution of power between the Maronite president and the Sunni Prime Minister).

state of radicalization that the Shi'a were experiencing under the influence of Lebanese and Palestinian Marxist and Ba'thist political organizations. The Sunnis were aware that an increase in the Shi'a share of power in the govoernment would take place at their expenses.[57] But, the Sunnis fear that the increased share of Shia'a in the government would take place at their expence was wrong as it became abundently clear from the Ta'if accord.[58] Nevertheless, it is highly inaccurate and rather simplistic to attribute one trend to the whole Sunni community in Lebanon, because there were and are many class and particularistic factor at work within the sect itself. While the Sunnis of Beirut were benefiting from the service sector of the economy, which turned their capital into a boom town, the Sunnis of Sidon, Tripoli, the Bekka, and 'Akkar took a more radical stand because they lived in areas largely or wholly neglected by the central government.[59]

The Sunni community today has produced a new breed of political and religious leadership. Sunni religious leaders are now following the Shi'a example, whereby the Imam combines religious and political powers. This radical approach has seriously challenged the historical dominance

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57. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p.36.

58. For detail see Augustus Richard Norton,`Lebanon After Ta'if: Is the Civil War Over,' Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 3, Summer 1991, pp. 457-473.

59. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., pp.36-37.

of prominent Sunni families. The new rising religious elite regardless of geographical differences, shares some general tendencies with the larger Sunni community. It springs from within the community itself, and articulates accurately the mood of the masses. The new elite lives in modest houses, in modest neighbourhoods. More important, the new elite is far more accessible to the public than the traditional leaders.[60]

The general tendencies of the Sunnis are well represented in the programmes of the new religious organizations. Some Sunnis fundamentalists believe that secularism is inconsistant with the teaching of Islam. They even regard secularism as a dangerous conspiracy designed by the communists to weaken the bonds of religion. Furthermore, when some Muslim call for the elimination of "political sectarianism," they seek only to increase Muslim representation in the Lebanese bureaucracy, and to dimnish the heavy representation of Maronites, especially in the most crucial and sensitive posts. The sunnis also consider the confrontation with the Phalangists essential in order to eliminate the latter's hegemony.[61]

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60. Ibid., p. 38.

61. Ibid., pp. 38-39.

RISE OF SUNNI FUNDAMENTALISM:

Thus various fundamentalist organizations emerged which exploited the fear within the community by mobilising it along strictly sectarian lines. In Beirut, 'Abd al-Hafiz Qasim, the head of the Muslim 'Ulama' Association and the Islamic Military Council, is a typical representative of this tendency. Such new organization compose a new Sunni fundamentalist movement that differs sharply from the traditional Saudi-supported societies of the Muslim Brotherhood in Lebanon. The later movement includes such groups as the Islamic Liberation Party, `Ubbad al-Rehman (Worshippers of the Compassionate), and al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah (The Islamic Group). The new Sunni fundamentalist movement is not centralized or coherent, and is not restricted to or monopolized by one organization, even in Beirut itself. A few Shaykhs have organized and armed their followers in given localities into highly centralized networks of cells. `Abd al-Hafiz Qasim, a close ally of the Murabitun and the head of the Lebanese delegation chosen by Yasir 'Arafat to attend the PNC meeting in Amman, founded the Islamic Military Council in the neighbourhood of al-Tariq al-Jadidah to assert an independent Sunni identity in a city dominated by Shi'a and Druze militias.[62]

There is also the charismatic al-Shaykh al-Habashi, who immigrated to Lebanon from Ethiopia years ago. Al-Habashi's

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62. Ibid., pp. 40-41.

influence and appeal have been increasing lately in West Beirut with the rise of anti-Shia'a attitudes among the Sunnis. His followers are organized into a highly centralized party, and are asked to pledge total allegiance to their leader or mawlana. His popularity can be attributed to his unique charisma as well as to his extremist sectarianism, which falls on fertile soil in today's Lebanon. Al-Habashi'doctrine combines enmity towards two major sects: the Maronites and the Shi'a. Following the uprising of Feb 6, 1984, when Amal and the PSP drove the army out of West Beirut, al-Habashi stated that it is muhallal (legal from the purely religious point of view) to spill the blood of a Shi'a. As far the Israelis, al-Habashi argues, it is futile to devote all efforts to fighting them as long as the balance of power is strongly in Israel's favour. His power and authority over his followers cover all facets of social and political life. He expects his young followrs, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the group, to reject the authority of their parents, presumably to ensure total obedience. Al-Habashi, who keeps a low profile and shuns press publicity, has been able to extend his influence from the neighbourhood of Burj Abi Haydar to al-Tariq al-Jadidah and Ras Beirut. Like all Sunni fundamentalist movements in Lebanon, the group calls for the restoration of the caliphate and consequently the establiishment of an Islamic republic in the country. A small Sunni fundamentalist group guided by a charismatic

shaykh is a characteristic of Sunni cities in Lebanon today.[63]

The Islamic unification Movement[64] in Tripoli under the leadership of Sa'id Sha'ban succeeded in couple of years in asserting his authority over the whole city in defiance of Syria's wishes. Sha'ban, who comes from a lower middle class background, has been successful in attracting the numerous and highly active lumpenproletariate[65] and unemployed workers of Tripoli, whose number has increased tremendously, first because of the closing down of factories and commercial establishment affected by the endemic civil strife in the city, and secondly because of rural migration from Dinniya and Akkar of people looking for jobs in the city.[66] Sha'ban sees no way out of the civil war except through an application of the Shari'ah in Lebanon under an Islamic authority. The Sunni vision of the Islamic state differs from the Shi'a notion of Welayat-e-al-Faqih (the Guardianship of the Jurisconsult): Sha'ban, who recognizes the difference between the two notions, calls for the re-emergence of the Sunni caliphate in order to confront the Shi'a version of an Islamic state on the Iranian model. The

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63. Ibid., p. 41.

64. Islamic Unification Movement is also known as Tawhid founded by Sha`ban in 1982. Sha`ban is widely believed to recieve financial support from Iran, and his relations with the Islamic Republic are excellent.

65. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p.41.

66. Marius K. Deeb, op.cit., p.274.

Islamic Unification Movement is strongly hostile to the communist movement in the Muslim world. In 1983, the Movement engaged in bloody massacres of communists and their families in Tripoli. Their bodies were thrown into the sea, to rid the soil of their ban influence.[67] The forces opposing Sha'ban's movement included the Arab Democratic Party, which has been heavily backed by Syria and whose ranks include a number of imported ~Alawis. Serious fighting occurred in 1984, and, despite Syria's September 1984 efforts to reach an agreement that Tripoli would be policed by Syrian and Lebanese forces, fighting continued throughout 1985.[68]

The power of Sunni fundamentalist groups is rapidly growing, and consequently threatening the appeal and influence of the Sunni traditional establishment... The popularity of Sunni fundamentalism is accompanied and indeed augmented by the intesification of communal frictions and contradictions between the Sunnis and the Shi'a. The origins of the conflict are of course religious and historical, but the evolution of the conflict has to be explained within the present geopolitical context of West Beirut. The Druze and the Shi'a shook the political structure of the city on February 6, 1984, when by sheer military force they imposed their combined hegemony. This development constituted a

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67. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p.42.

68. Augustus Richard Norton, op.cit., 1987, p.138.

novel factor in the history of Civil War . In 1975, Kamal Junbalat had been aware of Sunni sensibilities when he extablished a political council whose membership was almost entirely Sunni, under the chairmanship of a prominent Sunni cardiologist, `Usamah al-Fakhuri, to administer the city on behalf of the Lebanese National Movement. This gesture had nonetheless failed to ally Sunni fears, because the city was clearly under the tight control of Fatah. Today, however, the Shi'a - Druze alliance has imposed a hegemony without being able to ensure Sunni participation - even token - in decision making. This has increased the narrow sectarian consciousness among the Sunni masses, and has also led to a subtle and sometimes bloody communal war between the sects. The Sunni Mufti (Jurisconsult), for example, wrote a highly controversial article in a journal published by Dar al-Ifta` in which he suggested that Allah banned alcohal because `Ali ibn Abi Talib, the founder of the Shi'a sect, was a heavy drinker. The article provoked the Shi'a, who accused the Mufti of instigating conflict between the two sects. What happened in Sidon in February 1985 in the wake of the Israeli withdrawal from the city, when members of Hizbollah (the Party of God) raided the city and chanted pro-Iranian slogans, is clearly another sectarian provocation within the same communal context.[69]

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69. As`ad Abu Khalil, op.cit., p.39.

The Sunni community which constitutes about 26% of Lebanese population has always played an important political role in the country's political system since independence., Riyad Sulh, a pan-Arab sunni leader was a major party to 1943 National Pact. This pact awarded the prime minstership to the Sunni community, the second most imporant political post in the state hierarchy. The Sunnis very much resented the creation of Greater Lebanon, and never fully identified with the Lebanese state set up as guaranteed by a foreign Christian power. They always regarded themselves a members of the world wide community of sunni Muslims. In the beginning the Sunnis were reluctrant to participate in the political process of Lebanon. Only in the late 1930s and 1940s, with the rise to power of a young generation of Sunni leaders who had grown up under the new Lebanese political system, there opened up a modus vivendi between these leaders and their Christian counterparts. However, the efforts of the Lebanese Sunnis for the integration with the Syria ended, when they reached an agreement on the division of power with the Christians in 1943. But the terms of their informal agreement, known as National Pact, Lebanese Sunnis accepted separation from Syria on condition that Christians turned their back on France and accepted Lebanon's Arab idienity.

The Sunni community of Lebanon lacks the coherent political organizations of the Druze, Shi'a and Maronites. It also lacks a charismatic Sunni leader behind whom Sunni

could rally. Traditional leaders lost their influence during the Civil War and particularly after Israeli invasion of 1978 and 1982. They became weak during the Civil War because they lacked a strong united militia of their own. Furthermore, the regional particularist tendencies of the Sunnis appear to be greater than they are among other communities. The traditional leaders lost much of their influence during the Civil War and finally after the Israeli invasion of 1982 due to their collaboration with Israel.

Taif Agreement brokered by the Arab League reaffirmed the principle of confessionalism, in which the political claims of the fast growing Shi'a were blunted in favour of Sunni Muslims. The President was divested of his autonomous prerogatives. Presidential decisions now required the co-signature of the Prime Minister, except in two instances: the appointment of a Prime Minister; and when accepting the government's resignation. With the stipulations of the Taif Agreement incorporated into the constitution, the executive powers were effectively transferred to the Lebanese Cabinet. The main beneficiary of the changes was the office of the Prime Minister, who became the head of the government, speaking in its name, implmenting its policies and coordinating the various ministeries. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the cabinet, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, would assume the privileges and responsibilities of the presidency. Moreover,

the Sunnis were given 22 seats in the parliament equal to the shi'a. Thus, it may be said that the Sunnis will continue to have sufficient political powers in near future. They proved weaker during the civil war due to lack of military power, however, they defended the status quo due to the fear that any reform in Lebanese political system will reduce their powers.

CHAPTER – V

ORIGINS:

The Shi`a Muslim sect came into being as a result of a schism that took place in Islam in the decade after the death of Prophet Muhammad on the question of his successor (Caliphate).[1] Those who supported the claim to the Caliphate of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib are called Shi`a. They did so because they alleged that Ali had a Divine Right to the Caliphate, or successorship, and that he had received a special mandate from the Prophet, and because of their presuming a unique, spiritual authority in`Ali, which was passed on to certain of his descendants.[2]

Thus, the Shi`a recognized only `Ali, the nephew and son-in-law of the Prophet as the legitimate heir, but not the early three Caliphs Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman. The various communities and sects of the Shi`a venerate besides, the Prophet, `Ali, his sons Hasan and Husayn, and their

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1. Bruce Borthwick, Comparative Politics of the Middle east, London, 1980, p.136. Following the Prophet's death, Abu Bakr was elected as Calipha ("lieutenant" or "successor" to the Prophet) at the popular assembly in Medina. The election was carried out in haste as the worsening rivalry between the Ansar (native Medinans) and the Muhajirun (Meccan immigrants) threatened to split the Islamic community. Ali was not present, since he had stayed at the Prophet's deathbed. He was then just thirty years old, Arab respect for age naturally favoured claimants of riper years, although historical exeptions to such rule did exist.

2. The Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam, London, 1989, p.364.

descendants. Every year in the Muslim lunar month of *Muharram the Shi'a commemorate* the passion and martyrdom which Husayn suffered in 680 A.D. at Karbala in southern Iraq with frenzied intensity and even self-mutilation with knives.[3]

The Shi'a originated in a socio-political revolt during the first century of Islam and soon became a religious movement with 'heretical, doctrines. They advanced the idea that there was an infallible Imam in every age to whom God alone entrusted the guidance of his servants. Shi'a Muslims as a whole accept that a believer may practice taqiya, that is, concealment of his beliefs to save his life in the time of persecution, and may enter into a form of temporary marriage (nikah al-mut'a). In Lebanon the Shi'a are also known as the Mitawali. But the Mitawali belong to one of the major branches of the Shi'a division. They belong to the largest Shi'a sect, the Imamis, which recognizes twelve Imams[4] in the 'Ali- Fatima' line, the last of whom disappeared in 800 A.D. but will one day return as Mahdi ('the guided one') to restore justice and righteousness to the world.[5]

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3. Herald Vocke, The Lebanese War, London, 1978, pp. 6-7.
4. For detailed study of Shiism see Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam, Op-cit.,pp.364-370 and Edward Mortimer, Faith and Power: The Politics of Islam, London, 1982. According to Twelve-Imam Shiism the Imams are : 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Hasan ibn 'Ali', Husayn ibn 'Ali','Ali' Zain al-'Abidin', Muhammad al- Baqir, Ja'far as- Sadiq, Musa-I- Kazim, Ali ar-Rida, Muhmmad at- Taqi, Hasan al-'Askari and Muhammad' called al- Mahdi-I- Muntazar.
5. Peter Beaumont and others, The Middle East: A Geographical Study, New York, 1978, p. 370.

Shi`a are the oldest Muslim communities in Lebanon. At the time of the First crusade (1096), the whole country belonged to one or other of the Shi`a communities. The distribution of Mitawalis today is largely a relic of this early predominance. Pressure from the Sunni Mamluks (1291 to 1516), continued by the Ottoman Turks (1516 to 1918), drove them from `Akkar' most of the coastal plain and Kisrawan. Thus, the community has survived principally in the refuge and largely uncoveted areas of Upper Galilee and al-Bekka, the few Mitawali villages on the eastern side of Mount Lebanon are the relics of an attempt to move into an even more secure district during the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. The dominance of Mitawalis in Sur is the result of a more successful attempt at expansion about the same time.[6]

Very few Shi`a lived in the cities but a number of important small towns grew up in the Shi`a areas during the period between the two world wars. This was primarily due to the caravan routes between northern Syria, southern syria, Palestine and the Lebanese coast. Fairs and markets were held in such towns at Tyre, Bint Jubayl, Nabatiyyeh, Jwayya, Khiam and Ba`lbek, where people concluded business deals and exchanged the various regional agricultural products. Related cottage industries developed in this commercial atmosphere-shoemaking in Bint Jubayl and pottery

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6. Ibid., p. 375.

in Rashayyah al-Fakhar.[7]

Inspite of these changes, the Shi`a community had not yet experienced the social disruption, peasant revolts, or rapid expansion of export farming that had already transformed the Maronite area of Mount Lebanon as it was integrated into the world capitalist economy.[8] In the late 1940, nearly 85 percent of the Lebanese Shi`a were concentrated in two "heartlands," one in the south, in the area known as Jebel Amel, and the other in the northeast region of Ba`lbek-Hermel. No more than 10 percent of the entire community lived in cities.[9] And in 1948, Shi`a were only 3.5 percent of the population of Beirut.[10]

The vast majority of the Shi`a peasantry lived on meagre plots with poor soil and very limited water resources. They practiced subsistence dry farming (primarily grains, olive trees and vineyards in the south, grains and some orchards in Ba`lbek). Only tobacco production, well suited to the dry plateaus of southern Lebanon and grown as a cash crop, had expanded since the 1930s. But in 1948, tobacco was still a minor crop, planted in only three percent of the cultivated area of the south

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7. Salim Nasr, `Roots of the Shi`a Movement; Merip Reports, (June 1985), p. 10.

8. Ibid., p. 10.

9. Ibid., p. 10.

10. Ibid., p. 10.

and involving some 3,000 to 4,000 farmers.[11]

In the Hermel area, the main form of property ownership was collectively- owned land, more often grazing area than a well- defined holding. In the Ba`lbek area, very large private property existed alongside fields collectively owned by villages. The breakup of large tracts of land into smaller, private holdings had been under way since the 1930s, but peasant small holdings were still insignificant except near the towns and larger villages of Jebel Amel. The peasants gradually increased their access to the land through contract planting and buying the property of bankrupt feudal lords with savings from wage labour in the countryside and towns, and as time went on, a prosperous middle peasantry emerged. But the distribution of property remained very unequal. Large estates still accounted for three- fourths of the best land in the Shi`a countryside.[12]

In 1960s and 1970s, this situation changed radically. Export agriculture expanded rapidly. Banking and commercial networks based in Beirut, Sidon and Zahle spread throughout the Shi`a rural areas. This completely restructured traditional social and productive relations. Sharecropping practically disappeared (down to only five percent of agricultural workers by 1970). Food production greatly dimnished (only 15 percent of food consumed was locally

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11. Ibid., p. 10.

12. Ibid., p. 10.

grown by 1970 to 1975). Farmers increasingly specialised in two branches of export agriculture: nearly two- thirds of the value of agricultural production was concentrated in the cultivation of fruit trees and paultry farming. The number of agricultural wage earners increased and included non-Lebanese labour. Above all, the peasantry was in a state of permanent and deepening crisis, indebted to and exploited by merchants, the moneylenders and small local banks, and the suppliers of machinery, fertilizer and pesticides. The development of certain industrial crops such as tobacco and suger beets was blocked by powerful commercial cartels like the cigarette and sugar importers who had great influence on government policy. Thousands of sharecroppers and poor Shi`a peasant families were uprooted by indebtedness and bankruptcy, and forced to sell their property and move to the miserable suburbs of Beirut in search of work and better living conditions. More than 40 percent of the rural population had migrated by 1975. In the south, migration was more than 60 percent.[13]

The socio-economic status of Shi`a fare poorly in comparison to their non-Shi`a cohorts. According to Joseph Chamie who used the data of 1971, the average Shi`a family's income was 4,532 Lebanese pounds in comparison with the national average of 6,247 Lebanese pounds; the Shi`a comprised the highest percentage of families earning less

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13. Ibid., p. 11.

than 1,500 L; they were the most poorly educated (fifty percent with no schooling VS. thirty percent state-wide); and, the Shi`a was the least likely, in comparision with other recognised sects, to list his occupation as professional/technical, business/managerial, clerical, or crafts/operatives, and the most likely to list it as farming, peddlery, or labour. In his 1968 study Michael Hudson found that in the two regions where the Shi`a predominate, al-Bekka and al-junub, the percentage of students in the population ( about thirteen percent) lagged by as much as five percentage points behind Lebanon's other three regions. Riad B. Tabbarah, analyzing educational differentials, found that in 1971 only 6.6 percent of the Shi`a had at least a secondary education, compared to at least fifteen percent and seventeen percent for the Sunnis and the Christians, respectively. Citing official Lebanese government statistics for 1974, Hasan Sharif found that while the south had about twenty percent of the national population, it received less than 0.7 percent of the state budget. Sharif's description of the under development of the south illustrates the conditions under which many Shi`a have had to live'.[14]

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14. Augustus Richard Norton, `Harakat Amal' Edward E. Azar (ed.,) The Emergence of A New Lebanon, New York, 1984, pp. 163-164.

> "The South has the fewest paved roads per person or per acre. Running water is still missing in all villages and towns although water pipes were extended to many areas in the early sixties. Electricity networks were erected at about the same time, but they are inoperative most of the time. Sewage facilities are available only in large towns and cities. Outside the larger centers telephone service is completely absent except for a single manual cabin which is usually out of order. Doctors visit the villages once a week and sometimes only once a month. Clinics are maintained only in large villages and do not function regularly. Hospitals and pharmacies are found only in the larger populations centers. Elementary school is usually run in an old unhealthy house provided by the village. Intermediate schools were introduced to the large towns in the mid-sixties.[15]

According to the work done by the writer in Lebanon from 1980 to 1982, Sharif's description is still essentially correct. While there have been some minor improvements, the conditions depicted are for the most part at least as bad as noted, and in many respects have only been exacerbated by continued conflict and social disruption. Besides, South Lebanon, the condition of the Shi`a in some other areas were not better. Prior to the war, tens of thousands of Shi`a lived in East Beirut: they were driven out by the Phalangists through bloody military campaigns according to a well-planned demographic scheme. Yet a small shi`a community still lives near Jubayl when pre-war Lebanon sparkled in prosperity and gained world attention for its affluent society, the Shi`a were living in another world. They were the garbage collectors, the

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15. Ibid., p. 164.

beggars, the toilers, and the members of radical leftist organizations. The Lebanese state was always annoyed by Shi`a neighborhoods in Beirut. It was concerned that their "poverty belts" around Beirut might disturb the tourists on their way from and to the airport. In the first month after he assumed power, President Amin Gemayel ordered Lebanese army troops to destroy the Shi`a slums in Burj al-Barajinah, to "beautify the city".[16]

During the 1950s and 60s, emigration was to the Arab oil-producing countries. The social effects of emigration on the Shi`a community were considerable. Local power relations in the villages shifted. Traditional notables and religious family lost much ground in favour of the wealthy returning migrants who purchased land and orchards, established new commercial networks and carved out their own spheres of social influence. A new Shi`a bourgeoisie emerged. As a newcomer, it could not compete directly with the Sunni and Christian bourgeoisies, so had to seek its fortune in the relatively secondary sectors: real estate development, citrus crop cultivation, leisure activities, and trade with Africa. In the early 1970s, this Shi`a bourgeoisie began to expand its activities. Shi`a overseas capital now entered the banks, industries and large business concerns. Finally, a new Shi`a elite emerged, including

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16. As`ad Abu Khalil, `Druze, Sunni and Shiite Political Leadership in Present- Day Lebanon, Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 7, No. 4, (1985), pp. 43-44.

religious figures, politicians and financiers.[17]

By 1974, the Shi`a had ceased to be a largely rural community, situated on poor lands in marginal areas; now they were nearly two-thirds (63 percent) urban, and more than 45 percent of these urban dwellers were concentrated in Beirut and its suburbs.[18]

A high birth rate and an improvement in sanitary conditions in the countryside speeded up the Shi`a exodus to the metropolis. In 1948, the Shi`a numbered 225,000 or 18.2 percent of the population. They were the third largest community after the Maronites and the Sunni. By 1975 they had grown to an estimated 750,000, representing nearly 30 percent of the population, perhaps the largest community in the country.[19] The Shi`a now constitute some 40 percent of Lebanon's population.[20] Not long before, they had been largely illiterate, confined to a declining agriculture and dominated by a small traditional elite of large landowners and a reactionary clergy. Now, their class structure had changed significantly, with a new migrant bourgeoisie, a layer of middle-level salaried workers in the cities, an industrial proletariat in the suburbs of Beirut and a

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17. Salim Nasr, op-cit., p.11.

18. Ibid., p. 11.

19. Ibid., p. 12.

20. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, p. 43.

community of migrant workers in the Arab oil-producing countries.[21]

Shi`a community has been equally peripheral to the Lebanese political system that had developed under the French mandate and was consolidated with independence. At the beginning of the mandate, the Shi`a indicated a preference for unification with syria. A statute was passed in 1926 granting the Shi`a (Ja`fari) rite official recognition for the first time, following their sporadic agitation for unification and their participation in the rebellion of 1925-1926. This meant a right of community jurisdiction in personnel status matters, which heretofore had been within the jurisdiction of the Sunni Courts.[22]

According to the Lebanese census of 1932 (the last taken), the Shi`a community was the country's third largest, amounting to 18% of the population. Politically, it had not assumed the relative importance which would have been commensurate even with its share of the population at that time (let alone its subsequent growth).[23] The intercommunal National Pact of 1943 was essentially a division of power between the Maronite and Sunni political elite.[24] Indeed,

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21. Salim Nasr, op. cit., p. 12.

22. Leila M.T. Meo, Lebanon: Improbable Nation, Bloomington, 1965, p. 60.

23. Olmert Yosef, Middle East Contemporary Survey, (ed) by Colin Legum, Vol 7, 1982-83, New York 1985, p. 672.

24. Salim Nasr, op. cit., p.10.

the pact was basically an agreement between the two leading communities to divide Lebanon into two sphere of influence along Christian-Muslims lines. The Shi`as came under the Sunni Muslim wings in the larger Christian-Muslim balance. Being mostly poor isolated and underdeveloped in their hill country of the South and in the Bekka,`the Shi`a remained irrelevant, and hence hardly the object of government attention.[25] From the 1920s to the mid 1950s, Shi`a political representation was practically monopolized by six prominent landowning families- the Asads, the Zeins and the Ossirans in southern Lebanon, and the Hamadehs, the Haidars and the Husseinis in Ba`lbek and Bint Jubayl.[26] The half dozen Shi`a traditional feudal families who had absolute control of their communities were content with their share of power within the system, which enable them to be steadily elected as deputies, the control of the speakership and to hold cabinet posts in governmental coalition.[27] This elite was divided into quarreling rival factions. They were constantly shifting between alliance with and opposition to the central power in Beirut.[28]

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25. Dr. Mahmud A Faksh, `The Shi`a Community of Lebanon: A New Assertive Political Force', Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Stidies, Vol. 14, No. 3, (Spring, 1991), p.37.

26. Salim Nasr, Op. cit., p. 10.

27. Dr. Mahmud A Faksh, op. cit., p.37.

28. Salim Nasr, op. cit., p-10.

For over two decades, the Shi`a community was kept at the bottom of the socioeconomic and political structure, and its members remained essentially disenfrenchised. The great majority languished in their remote regions. Shi`a led a life of resignation to their plight, a plight that a quietist religious leadership did little to ameliorate.[29]

For over thirty years, between 1943 and 1975, the Lebanese polity seemed to function satisfactorily, except for a short but difficult period during the 1958 civil war. But the winds of change that then began would ultimately undermine the established order and lead to the rise of Shi`a power. During the 1960s and 1970s, the evolving polity produced new forces within the Shi`a community that upset the Shi`a status quo. Rapid socioeconomic modernization, the spread of education, urbanization, and the flood of petro-money brought greater mobilization and politicization of the disenfrenchised shi`a.[30]

A new Shi`a middle class, mostly Western-educated and modernist, that would later champion Shi`a struggle for social and political reform, came into being. Previously, enterprising young Shi`a feeling constrained by the status quo, had emigrated to West Africa and elsewhere. Beginning in the 1960s, such persons migrated to Beirut. Joining the exodus over the next two decades was a flood of rural poor

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29. Dr. Mahmud A Faksh, op. cit., p. 38.

30. Ibid., p. 38.

Shi'a who left for the metropolis, partly because of village life hardship and economic insecurity under a semi-feudal order and partly because of increasing Palestinian Israeli fighting in the south following the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. There in huge ghettos in the southern suburbs, they formed an ever-growing sector made up of industrial proletariate, migrant labourers, and unemployed poor.[31]

In Beirut, the migrants came face to face with the affluence of the established communities. The city's general prosperity was a dismaying contrast to their increasingly crowded and dismal environment. Their heightened conciousness of the disparity contributed to their radicalization. The unhappy newcomers then were a recruitment pool for all sorts of anti-establishment parties and oppositional groups, communists and radical-socialist parties found support from this constituency.[32]

One of the major consequences of the process of socioeconomic change within the Shi'a community is the breakdown of the traditional leadership structure. The Zu'ama authority and influence over their village subjects who migrated were lost, and the old system that held the patron-client relationship intact was diminished and eventually rendered obsolete. The process also eroded the position of the status quo-oriented religious leaders, who

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31. Ibid., pp. 38-39.

32. Ibid., p. 39.

were supplanted by a socially active and reform-minded religions leadership, especially following the rise of Imam Musa al-Sadr in the 1960s. Another consequence of the process of socioeconomic change, coupled with the growth of communication, is the lessening of Shi`a isolation and the fostering of greater community conciousness and identification. The old physical and cultural barriers were gone.[33]

The Shi`a now had an active and radicalized intelligentsia, an ambitious and enterprising counter-elite, and other new strata with new demands. They began to challenge the rules of the game and to question the distribution of power and resources in the Lebanese system. In this context, the movement of Imam Musa al-Sadr was born in the early 1970s, an expression of the demographic and socioeconomic shift of the Shi`a from the periphery toward the city-state of Beirut. The new movement, separated from the leftist-nationalist forces.[34]

IMAM MUSA AL-SADR: HARAKAT-AL-MAHRUMIN:

The movement was called by different names: the movement of Imam Musa al-Sadr, the Movement of the Dispossessed (Harakat al-Mahrumin), the Movement for the Rights of the Shi`a, or, more simply,"The Shi`a Movement."

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33. Ibid., p. 39.

34. Salim Nasr, op. cit., p. 12.

Whatever the name, it was a mass movement in the Lebanese Shi`a community, guided and inspired by its spiritual head and charismatic leader, Imam Musa al-Sadr.[35] The main reason for the establishment of the Movement of Disinherited was to mobilize the Shi`a community and achieve specific political objectives, such as obtaining for the Shi`a a greater share of positions in the higher echelons of the civil service, and creating development projects in the Shi`a regions of the south and northern Bekka.[36]

During the years before the outbreak of Civil War in 1975, the movement attempted to satisfy its social and political demands through various forms of mobilization, pressure and action. This had a powerful effect on the sectarian balance and the functioning of the political system and the state administration. It was a popular movement with a strong rural base in the major outlying towns, and among the clans of Ba`lbek and the uprooted migrants in the suburbs of Beirut. Stimulated by the sermons and the energetic personal action of Imam al-Sadr himself, it was essentially a spontaneous popular upsurge defined by religion and by its social base. Its main constituents were the dispossessed urban migrants, the poverty-ridden peasantry, the growing petty bourgeoisie whose advancement was blocked and the new bourgeoisie which was excluded from

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35. Ibid., p. 12.

36. Marius K Deeb, `Lebanon: Prospect for National Reconciliation in the Mid- 1980s', The Middle East Journal, Vol. 38, No.2 (Spring, 1984), p. 268.

the political system.[37]

The movement used moral and religious language and themes based on the Shi`a tradition of protest. As a movement of "Moral"rebirth and community reorganization, it was clearly a reaction to the breakdown of rural Lebanon and the crisis of the new migrants in the cities. It was also a political movement of self-defence against the increasing Israeli attacks, and a means of pressuring the state to take action.[38]

The movement was largely autonomous, beginning to develop its own character in the summer of 1973. But the movement grew at a fairly steady pace over several years. Occasionally there were periods of intense activity such as mass rallies, religious celebrations, political actions, sit-ins, strikes, and the observation of national solidarity days. Such major events occurred practically every month during 1974 and 1975.[39]

Following his arrival in tyre from his native Iran in 1960 to assume the religious leadership position of the Shi'a community in the south, Imam Musa al-Sadr soon turned into an activist social reformer. He sought to enter the political arena by politicizing his role as a religious cleric, a complete departure from customary clerical

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37. Salim Nasr, op-cit., p. 12.

38. Ibid., p. 12.

39. Ibid., p. 12.

acquiescence. In the midst of the transformation sweeping across Lebanon, al-Sadr was appalled by what he described as the longtime `sufferings' (masa`ib) of the Shi`a from poverty, disease, and Sunni and Christian prejudice and maltreatment. He urged the Shi`a not to accept their lot as something predetermined, and set out to achieve social and economic justice and political equity through organization. For the first time in their history, the Shi`as became politically active under their own banner.[40]

The government's unresponsiveness to deteriorating conditions of the Shi`a in the south, and the worsening security there because of PLO-Israeli clashes, especially following the influx of Palestinians in 1970-1971, led al-Sadr to launch at a rally in 1974 in Ba`alback in the Bekka valley his Movement of the Deprived. He called upon his followers to rise up against their oppressors, struggle for their rights, and even endure martyrdom if necessary.[41]

Imam Musa al-Sadr's mobilization strategy threatened both the Zu`ama's traditional leadership and the left's hold on the young Shi`a. In fact, he showed equal disdain toward the Zu`ama's exploitative, corrupt, and self-serving practices and the left's secularist, socialist, and pan-Arab nationalist rhetoric. His direct appeal to the Shi`a masses and his identification with their cause undermined the

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40. Dr. Mahmud A. Faksh, op. cit., p. 41.

41. Ibid., pp. 41-42.

Zu'ama's position and whittled down the left's attractiveness for the young. He had a natural advantage over the left by virtue of his standing as the authentic spokesman of the community.[42]

Since his arrival in Lebanon, Imam Musa al-Sadr had lobbied for official recognition of the community's independence to go beyond the French decree of January 1926, which gave it autonomous juridical status and separate religious courts. He wanted the establishment of a Shi'a religious council similar to the councils of the other communities. In November 1967, the Chamber of Deputies passed a law enabling the creation of the Supreme Islamic Shi'a Council (SISC), a representative body independent of Sunni Muslims. Established in 1969, the council is basically bureaucratic organization run by Shi'a officials who are salaried government employees. It holds supreme authority in the conduct of religious affairs and serves to articulate Shi'a demands within the system. Its combined religious and political functions are a legacy of Imam Musa al-Sadr. Al-Sadr was elected its first chairman and held the post until his disappearance in 1978 while on a visit to Libya. He used his positions in SISC, the Movement of the Deprived, and AMAL to claim leadership of the entire community, which added to his rising popularity among the Shi'a and to his significance in Lebanese politics.[43]

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42. Ibid., p. 42.

43. Ibid., pp. 42-43.

But the movement of Imam Musa al-Sadr was by no means the only important politicizing force within the Shi`a communities. The Communist Party of Lebanon and later the Organization of Communist Action recruited heavily among the Shi`a.[44] Besides, communist organizations, many young Shi`a men joined such groups as the (pro-Syrian) Ba'ath organization, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, the ( Iraqi-Supported) Arab Liberation Front (ALF).[45] The Shi`a of the south, the Bekka, and Beirut joined radical organizations as early as the late fifties. In the 1960 parliamentary elections, for example, a candidate of the Arab Nationalist Movement in Tyre Muhammad al-Zayyat, who was from a poor background, polled more than seven thousand votes and seriously challenged the dominance of the traditional families' "mafia" in the city. The leftist and ostensibly secular organizations appealed to the oppressed, Shi`a , who desperately sought a change in their conditions.[46] These organizations, along with the Arab Socialist Action Party-Lebanon would initiate the Lebanese National Resistance Front against the Israeli occupation beginning in September 1982. These secular parties, as well as the more militantly sectarian Shi`a parties (Islamic

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44. Jeo Stork, `The War of the Camps, the War of the Hostages' MERIP Reports, (June, 1985), p. 4.

45. Augustus Richard Norton, Harakat Amal in Edward E. Azar, The Emergence of a New Lebanon, New York, 1984, p.117.

46. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, p.45.

Amal and Hizbollah), seem to have been responsible for the majority of the armed actions against Israeli forces and their local collaborators, for which Amal has been glad to take the credit.[47]

Musa al-Sadr's movements though, crystallized the incipient politicization of this community during the years leading into the Civil War, when social and political struggles in Lebanon were inconsistently conjoined with sectarian identity.[48] But it was expedient for the Shi`a to join the secular organizations, since sectarianism was basically to the advantage of the Maronite Sunni elite. It was unthinkable that the Shi`a would struggle to preserve a system that excluded them anyway, it was wiser to call for the elimination of sectarianism and the establishment of a "secular" arrangement which would certainly reflect their numerical superiority.[49]

The main purpose of the Shi`a movement in Lebanon was to defend a community in crisis- the crisis of breakdown in rural Lebanon, of Israeli attacks, of mass rural exodus, and of proletarianization. The movement also sought to achieve "equality" with other communities within the Lebanese confessional system, including a share in the aministration, the national budget and the economy.[50]

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47. Jeo Stork, op. cit., p.4.
48. Ibid., p.4.
49. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, pp. 45-46.
50. Salim Nasr, op-cit., p. 13.

Two themes of the movement's discourse stand out. First is the relationship of the community with the state and the resulting distribution of wealth. This was often discussed in terms of the unfair allocation of government posts and civil service jobs, as well as, discriminatory economic and social policies (not enough development projects or irrigation schemes, limits on tobacco production, and so forth). There was also the extreme backwardness and poverty of most Shi`a areas and the monopoly of a minority over political power. The second main theme of the movement was the relationship of the Shi`a community to the Arab-Israeli War. There were constant references to the Israeli attacks which concentrated on south Lebanon, the need for a national defence, and the right and duty of popular self-defence.[51]

The movement saw change as working to the detriment of the Shi`a contributing to their social marginalization, their exclusion from power, and the historical backwardness of the Shi`a hinterland. The goal was to remove the barriers, particularly at the level of state employment, development policy and the confessional and regional allocation of funds. The Lebanese ruling class and the confessional system stood in the way of advancement for the Shi`a community- and the dispossessed in general- and jeopardized the future of the country itself.[52]

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51. Ibid., p. 13.
52. Ibid., p. 13.

The movement emphasized economic development as a means of bringing south Lebanon and the Ba`lbek region up to the level of the rest of the country. Detailed lists of the project were proposed, stressing irrigation schemes (dams, irrigation networks, reservoirs) and infrastructure (schools, hospitals, roads). The movement's view of economic development was narrowly conceived. It was short-term and regionally limited. Furthermore, the movement saw economic development in terms of distribution, not production. It demanded a truly proportionate share, seeing the state alone as responsible for economic development and backwardness.[53]

The movement's political programme included:

> A gradual reform of the confessional system, to begin by eliminating the confessional distribution of civil service posts except at the highest executive and legislative levels.
>
> A chamber of religions to the created alongside the chamber of deputies (parliament). This body would strike a balance between the sects and arbitrate among them. It would meet for one month each year to take up cases of discrimination and "correct the unequal opportunities" available to citizens in their "democratic competition"
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> A change in the electoral law to "allow for a better representation of the political aspirations of the Lebanese public." The proposed system was a proportional one, which would clearly give the Shi`a a greater voice.
>
> Overall improvement in the quality and morality of political life. As Imam al-Sadr said in late 1974,"the movement was not established to take power or win portfolios or seats in parliament. Our purpose is to reform the political climate, not to elect politicians. We are struggling against corruption and voter intimidation, but it is not our role to influence the voter's choice.[54]

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53. Ibid., p. 13.
54. Ibid., p. 13.

THE AMAL:

Afwaj al-Muqawamah al-Lubnaniyah (AMAL;Lebanese Resistance Battalions) had been founded by Imam Musa al-Sadr in 1975 as a militia group, attached to the Movement of the Deprived, to protect the community in the Civil War and to defend the south which was left largely on its own following the civil war. Its creation marked a turning point in the evolution of Shi`a power. It transformed the Movement of the Deprived into an armed political organization and, in the process, superseded it as the major Shi`a politico-military organization and one of the leading contender for power and influence. Subsequently, the name Mahrumin fell into disuse, and the movement that al-Sadr founded came to be known as Harakat Amal (or simply, Amal, not, as is sometimes thought, al-Amal).

The Shi`a community is much more powerful and organized than the fragmented Sunni community. Nonetheless, Amal, the dominant organization, does not monopolize the political leadership of the Shi`a although the movement is developing along fascistic lines, whereby all potential rivals are being eliminated. Moreover, Amal is far from a typical fascistic organization. Much like Fatah, Amal is not a cohesive, iron-disciplined organization. It is riddle with factionalism and schismatic tensions. The movement's lack of a well- defined ideology or Programme makes it difficult for members and leaders to adhere to the same set of principles,

and policies.[55] Muhammad Ghaddar, for example, who was a Politburo member and a leader of Amal in al-Ghaziyah, openly supported the Israeli invasion of 1982. In contrast to Ghaddar, another Amal regional leader in Sidon, Mahmud al-Faqih, has consistently opposed the Israeli occupation of Lebanon. These two examples illustrate that Amal's various geographical branches are not tied to a central ideological and political position, but rather are subject to the particularist tendencies of each region.[56]

Amal was successful in recruiting some of the Shi`a masses by advocating armed struggle. It was supported and funded by Fatah and by Syria, through the Sa'iqah organization, presumably to confront and limit the strong sweeping leftist tide in Lebanon, of which both parties were fearful. Initially Fatah also imparted training to Amal militia. Amal was affiliated with the reform-oriented Lebanese National Movement (LNM) and their fedayeen allies during the first year of the civil war, but when the Syrians intervened in June 1976 to prevent the defeat of the Maronite-dominated Lebanese Front, al-Sadr split with his erstwhile allies and staunchly supported the Syrians. It was a minor component of LNM, overshadowed by the military might of its many Competitors. Musa al-Sadr only led a minority faction of the politically affiliated Shi`a.

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55. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, p. 45.

56. Ibid., p. 48.

Indeed, it was the multiconfessional reform-oriented or revolutionary parties and militias that attracted the majority of the politicized Shi`a. Amal's still limited appeal even among Shi`a was evident in June 1976, when the PLO-LNM forces were able to take over all Amal bases in only two days.[57] Moreover, Amal lost much of its popularity and credibility as a result of its close association with the Syrian regime during the war. More than that many Shi`a questioned the suspicious role played by the Amal during the battle of the Palestinian-held Shi`a quarter of Beirut, known as al Nab`ah in August 1976, when the Phalangists drove thousands of Shi`a from that district. Muhammad Yaqub, who disappeared with al-Sadr in Libya in 1978, was blamed for trusting- or collaborating with the Phalangists during the evacuation negotiations.[58] Thus, Amal's influence waned considerably in the 1976-78 period.

Amal's resurgence can be located in a series of developments between March 1978 and February 1979: the Israeli invasion known as Operation Litani; the disappearance of Musa-al Sadr on a trip to Libya, and the success of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran.

1. Operation Litani marked an important shift of Israeli policy, under the new likud government, from one of retaliation to "relentless disruption" across south

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57. Joe Stork, op. cit., p. 4.

58. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, pp. 46-47.

Lebanon. The significant consequence of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF's) offensive was that residents of the south were constantly reminded that a continuing Palestinian presence in the region would preclude any surcease to the Israeli campaign.[59] Repeated raids had the intended effect of fostering anti-Palestinian sentiments among the local population. Rather than casting blame on the Israeli-as had been the case in the past-the cause of the villagers plight was often said to be the Palestinians.[60] In the south, Palestinians in general were increasingly viewed as interlopers, responsible for the periodic devastating Israeli attacks. Fatah and other PLO forces contributed to this process by alienating southerners with their arrogance and "excesses". This helped to close off the south to recruitment by the Lebanese groups allied with the PLO, restricting access to Amal. Second, person affiliated with the LNM tended to stay away from their villages, due to frequent raids, and hence from additional recruits.[61] Third, heretofore apolitical villagers learned that the best protection against unwanted early morning visitors was affiliation with a movement (viz Amal) that would prevent "undesirable" from entering their villages. In a

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59. Augustus Richard Norton, op. cit., 1984, p. 173.

60. Ibid., p. 174.

61. Ibid., p. 173.

number of towns and villages, local residents even established their, own local security forces, which would petrol during the hours of darkness. Over time, these ad hoc militia groups tended to affiliate with Amal.[62]

2. Accompanied by two associates, Sheikh Muhammed Shahadeh Ya'qub and Shafi'Abbas Badr al-Din, Musa al-Sadr arrived in Libya on August 25, 1978, for visit of unspecified length and purpose. According to an account, the Imam Musa decided to leave Libya on August 31, 1978, the eve of the Libyan national holiday commemorating the September 1, 1970 Revolution. Musa al-Sadr has not been heard from since, although occasional reports of dubious origins indicate that he is still alive. Most impartial observers believe him to be dead, as do a good number of his followers- when speaking privately.[63]

While the mystery of Musa al-Sadr's fate remains, his disappearance has been of enormous symbolic importance to Amal. His persona has been elevated to that of a national martyr for many of Lebanon's Shi`a. By 1979, his face had been added to the panoply of posters that testify to the multitude of causes and movements in Lebanon. The movement's newspaper,Amal, uses a picture

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62. Ibid., pp. 173-174.

63. Ibid., p. 175.

of Imam Musa on its masthead and regularly reprints his speeches and commentary. Most of the younger members of Amal wear a button or a pendant with al-Sadr`s visage on it, and some even sport silk-screened t-shirts depicting him.[64] Moreover, his disappearance reminded Lebanese Shi`a of the ghaybah (absence) of their twelfth Imam. According to Shi`a religious tradition, the twelfth Imam, who disappeared in the ninth century, will return one day to rescue his people. The disappearance of al-Sadr revived this belief, and raises hopes. Like the twelfth Imam, al-Mahdi al-Muntazar (d 878) (the Awaited Guide), al-Sadr is believed to be on his way back to his people.[65] All this worked to benefit Amal, further enhancing Shi`a community mobilization and assertiveness. More than a few Amal leaders concede that a "disappeared" Imam is doubtlessly of greater value for the political mobilization of the masses than a "present" one.[66]

3. A third ingredient in Amal's revival was the success of the Iranian Revolution and the triumph of a specifically Shi`a model of political power. There is no question that the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran was keenly effective among the Shi`a of Lebanon. The deposition of the Shah in January 1979

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64. Ibid., p. 177.

65. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, p. 48.

66. Augustus Richard Norton, op. cit., 1984, p. 177.

served as an important exemplar demonstrating what a pious, well organized, and motivated ummah could accomplish in the face of oppression and injustice. Even more important, the new regime in Tehran promised to be an important source of material and political support.[67] Even in the event that the Iranian Government provided no more than rhetorical support, the very fact that the Islamic Revolution's success has been an important source of pride and inspiration to the Lebanese coreligionists.[68]

There has been close relationship between Tehran and the Lebanese Shi`a community. One interesting example of that relationship is the case of Doctor Mustafa Chamran. Chamran, an Iranian, was the director of the Burj Ash-Shamali Technical Institute- which was probably partially financed with Iranian monies-until 1979, when he departed Lebanon to become a member of the Supreme Defence Council in the new Islamic Government. While it is not illogical to presume that such a well-placed official would have been of immeasurable assistance in securing substantial assistance for Amal.[69]

Moreover, the Shi`a of Lebanon were increasingly alienated by the policies and conduct of the PLO and the

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67. Ibid., p. 178.

68. Ibid., p. 178.

69. Ibid., p. 178.

Lebanese National Movement Organizations. The slogans of these organizations did not particularly address Shi`a demands for more political and economic power. Indeed, the policies of the two movements were dictated more by regional mathematics than by purely Lebanese conditions. The showmanship and corruption of the leadership of the PLO and the Lebanese National Movement dealt a heavy blow to the few who maintained some hope and progressive vision. The situation in the south was particularly severe, where the `Azmis' of the "Revolution" who in the name of that "Revolution" committed ugly acts of theft, crimes, rape and oppression dominated the region.[70] Moreover, there was general Lebanese perception, particularly acute among Shi`a that the Lebanese National Movement and its programme of deconfessionalization had failed, not only against its Phalangist, Syrian and Israeli adversaries but also within the component of the movement. The movement had lost its momentum and potential. Amal exploited the climate to mobilize the disenchanted Shi`a along chauvinist Lebanese and sectarian Shi`a lines.

Amal today is the major , mainstream political organization representing the Shi`a of Lebanon. The secret of its strengh lies in the movement's extention to all regions inhabited by Shi`a: the Bekka, the south, and Beirut and its suburs. However, to underline the broad geographical

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70. As`ad Abu Khalil , op. cit., 1985, p. 47.

base of the movement is not to attribute cohesive bonds to ranks and file or leadership or to dismiss the schismatic implications of its strong particularistic tendencies. The Amal movement resembles the past organizational structure of Fatah in Lebanon. It advocates an ill-defined and vague ideology, which is often expressed in general and ambiguous terms. This feature is far from being a weakness within the rapidly changing nature of the Lebanese context and masses: it makes Amal more able to adjust to the growing radical mood of the Shi`a. Amal can easily swing with the Shi`a popular wind. Amal also manages to support a leader who enjoys the endorsement of conflictual cliques within the ruling elite. As in Fatah, an Amal regional leader cares very little about policy consistency, because recruitment in a particular area draws heavily upon a certain regional context. Muhammad Ghaddar, for example, who was a politburo member and a leader of Amal in al-Ghaziyah, as already mentioned, openly supported the Israeli invasion of 1982. In contrast to Ghaddar, another Amal regional leader in Sidon, Mahmud al-Faqih, has consistently opposed to Israeli occupation of Lebanon. These two examples illustrate that Amal's various geographical branches are not tied to a central ideological and political position, but rather are subject to the particularist tendencies of each region.[71]

The Amal movement has adjusted successfully to the

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71. Ibid., p. 48.

changing political situation of the country. As close as it was to the Syrian- sponsored National Salvation Front, Amal refused to join it, in order to maintain an image of relative independence in political action. It also refused to join the National Democratic Front, which includes all the pro-Syrian Organizations in the country, in order not to associate itself with the enemies of the past: the Lebanese communists, with whom it fought several battles prior to the Israeli invasion.[72]

The single most important event in the history of the emergence of Shi`a fundamentalist groups in Lebanon was the creation of the Salvation Committee by president Ilyas Sarkis in June 1982. Sarkis formed the Committee, which included Bashir Gemayel and Nabi Berri among others to face the repurcussions of the Israeli invasion. Berri's membership in the Committee reinforced the rift in the Amal Movement between Berri's faction and those who were pushing for more hard-line Islamic line in accordance with Iranian designs in Lebanon. Husayn al-Musawi, a key leading figure in Amal (Member of AMAL's Command Council) at the time, objected to Berri's acceptance of membership in the Committee and called for Iranian arbitration of the matter. The issue was referred to the Iranian ambassador in Damascus at the time, Ali Akbar Muhtashimi, who ruled in favour of Musawi and stated that it was inappropriate for Berri to

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72. Ibid., pp. 48-49.

accept to be a member of a Committee that included, among others, Bashir Gemayel. Berri did not abide by the Iranian ruling, and Musawi resigned and formed his own Islamic Amal movement.[73]

Al-Musawi comes from a middle-class background, but from a prestigious family that claims descent from the Prophet (a sayyid family). Al-Musawi is a former school teacher whom al-Sadr expelled from Amal in the mid-seventies because of his insistence on establishing an Islamic republic in Lebanon.[74] He represented a complete departure, from the original Amal line in that he broke with the traditional Shi`a line of Lebanese patriotism- as represented by Sadr- and his wish to mobilize the community for the cause of a world-wide Islamic revolution. Musawi's line, in fact, amounted to a total rejection of the Lebanese political system of religious pluralism[75] because it "does not belong to the Islamic Umma (Community of believers)[76]

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73. As`ad Abu Khalil, `Ideology and Practice of Hizbollah in Lebanon: Islamization of Leninist Organizational Principles', Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 27, No. 3, (July 1991), p. 391.

74. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, p. 49. In 1978, Musawi was transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Higher Shi`a Council, where he remained until his rift with Berri. Despite his reputation for Charismatic leadership his influence has been limited to the Ba`albek and Zahla regions.

75. Olmert Yosef, op. cit., p 673.

76. Marium Deeb, Militant Islamic Movement in Lebanon: Origins, Social Basis and Ideology, Wasington, D.C. (November, 1986), p. 8. As cited in Vaziri, Haleh, op. cit., p. 9.

and the legitimacy of the Lebanese state.[77] He accused AMAL's leadership under Berri of moderation toward, and even collaboration with Israel and charged it of secularism and in violation of its Islamic base.[78]

Musawi embraced Khomeini's ideology, including the Ayatollah's interpretation of "the guardianship of the jurisconsult" [Wilayat-al-Faqih]. He believes that Khomeini was the deputy of the Hidden Imam and that the Iranian leader was divinely empowered to determine the compatibility of temporal and religious laws. Thus, the relationship between Islamic AMAL and Iran was not simply a political one between a patron state and a client organization.

Rather, their relationship has existed within the context of Wilayat-al-Faqih and resembles the bond between father and son. Consequently, Musawi welcomed the Pasdaran presence in Ba'albek and understood their dual objective as the dissemination of the call of Islam, and victory against Israel.[79]

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77. Olmert Yosef, op. cit., p. 673.

78. Dr. Mahmud A Faksh, op. cit., p. 51.

79. Haleh Vaziri, 'Iran's Involvement in Lebannon: Polarization and Radicalization of Militant Islamic Movement' Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 16, No. 2, (Winter, 1992), p. 9.

HIZBOLLAH:

Hizbollah (party of God) came into being in 1982, in the wake of Israeli invasion, at the initiative of a group of Islamic 'Ulama' close to Muhammad Husayn Fadlullah.[80] The role of Fadlullah in the establishment of Hizbollah is still unclear.[81] One account maintained that he preferred to have Muslim Shi'a fundamentalists working within the body of the Amal movement in order to reach the broadest possible audience in the Shi'a community. But the tide of pro-Iranian sentiments within the Shi'a community was growing at a pace that could not be restrained within the confines of Amal's alliance with the Syrian regime. Furthermore, Iran wanted to have a loyal and obedient organization in Lebanon to further its influence amongst the Shi'a and to strike at its many enemies. The presence of Israeli troops and US marines in Lebanon added another incentive for direct Iranian involvement in Lebanon.[82]

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80. Fadlullah is a noted religious scholar who has published more than twenty books in the area of Islamic jurisprudence. He was born in the village of 'Ayanta' in the South Lebanon, near the Israeli border. He studied in Shi'a religious schools in al- Najaf in Iraq. When he finished his education, Fadlullah lived in a Shi'a neighourhood in East Beirut: al-Nabah. In 1976 the Phalangist forced evicted all Shi'a from al-Nabah in a bloody military campaign that cost Fadlullah members of his immediate family.

81. Fadlullah denied that he is the leader of the movement, yet acknowledged his influence among Lebanese Shi'a. He has been called the organization's "Supreme Guide" - the same title given to Khomeini in context of Iran's Islamic Republic.

82. As'ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1991, p. 390.

Lacking any official structure or membership list, Hizbollah is not a political party in the Western sense, although it served many of the same purposes. It was similar in "structure" to the religious organizations in Iran, its membership fluid and dependent upon the message and personal appeal of religious leaders. Musawi said of it,"Hizbollah is the people's march. It is a popular state. In other words, every believer who fights Israel in the south and who defends the honour of the Muslims in Beirut or the Bekka valley and has links with the Islamic revolution belongs to Hizbollah .... We [in Islamic Amal] work for Islam and are bound to the Islamic revolution. Therefore, we are part of Hizbollah".[83]

The word hizb in Arabic does not have the same connotation that the word party has in English. According to classical origins of the root of the word, hizb means a community, sect, or a group of followers. However, Hizbollah ideology emphasized the Quranic Origins of its political terminology. Almost all of the political terms that the party uses in its political literature are derived from the Quran, one Hizbollah leader states that most of the activities and `movement' of Muslims should be based on the Quranic Ayats. However, the claim that all policies and actions of the Party of God are derived from the Quran is not persuasive.[84]

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83. Wright Robin, Sacred Rage, London, 1986, p. 82.

84. Ibid., pp. 392-393.

While it is true that the term Hizbollah appears in the Quran in more than one instance, the context of its use is different from its current use by the Party. In Surat al-Ma'idah (Ayat 56) it is stated that 'Hizbollah are sure to triumph.' Tabari interpreted the term Hizbollah as Allah's followers or supporters. The term Hizbollah also appears with the same connotation in Surat al-Mujadilah (Ayat 22). Tabari interpreted the term Hizbollah in the latter Surat to mean the soldiers of God. There is no evidence that the Quranic text implied an organizational structure from Muslim activists, as Hizbollah ideologues argue today.[85]

The ideology of Hizbollah is also based on the attachment to the leadership of the Ulama in Muslim society. The task of citing religious text in Islam to prove that the religion required Muslims to abide by the ruling and orders of their leaders is not difficult. A well-known Hadith by Prophet Muhammad (the Ulama are the heirs of the prophets) is used by the ideologists of Hizbollah to justify the leadership structures of Hizbollah in which the Ulama play the major role. In the highest ruling body of the Party of God, Majlis ash- Shura, only one non-clerical persons is reported to be a member. The emphasis on the roles of the Ulama in society is a fundamental feature of the ideology of the Party of God.[86] The leaders of the Party of God believe

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85. Ibid., p. 393.

86. Ibid., p. 393.

that the Ulama alone can bring about Islamic consciousness, or what is called `the conciousness of unification', in the terminology of the Party. This belief accounts for the exclusive powers that the Ulama have in the party, and which makes them unaccountable for their deeds. Shaykh Ibrahim al-Amin sees the powers of the Ulama as unlimited.[87]

In Hizbollah's ideology, injustice is caused by people; it is the result of what some people do to others. Hizbollah believes that justice and equality can be achieved through human efforts, through a revolutionary process.[88] Fadlullah discarded the notion of Taqiya and advocated armed struggle against Muslim governments which stray from religious tenets. Specially, he urged Muslims to organize along party lines and to take up arms against such governments.[89] Hizbollah represents a revolutionary version of Shi`a Islam. The conservative and orthodox Shi`a theological school believes that justice and equality can only be achieved with the return of the twelfth Imam. The concept of Wilayat al - Faqih calls for a political revolution to establish Islamic order headed by the Deputy of Imam on earth.[90]

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87. Ibid., p. 394.

88. Ibid., p. 395.

89. Haleh Vaziri, op. cit., p. 10.

90. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1991, pp. 395-396.

The religio - political doctrine that appears to motivate the entire Shi`a religious elite in Lebanon today is the Shi`a notion of Wilayat al-Faqih (the Guardianship of the Jurisconsult). In the theological heritage of the twelvers Shi`a to whom the Shi`a of Lebanon and Iran belong, there are basically two theories as to what the Shi`a should do in the absence of the twelfth Imam (Ghaybat al-Imam), who, according to Shi`a religious tradition vanished in the ninth century but will return to save his people. The first theory suggest that Muslims should rule according to the Quranic principle of al-Shura (Consultation), whereby it is not important who the ruler is. This theory holds that an Islamic order is impossible as long as the twelfth Imam is in his occultational absence. The second jurisprudent school introduces the doctrine of Wilayat al-Faqih, where the ultimate source of power and legislation is in the hands of the Faqih (jurisconsult), who should combine a knowledge of Islam with a sense of justice. Some years ago, many Lebanese and Iranian jurisprudents advocated the notion of al-Shura rather than that of Wilayat al-Faqih..[91] Fadlullah speaks of majority rule, yet his ideas are elitist. He believes that the majority's opinion is not necessarily "right" and that the principle of consultation (Shura) has little to do with democracy.[92] The Iranian revolution persuaded many jurisprudents of the validity of the latter

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91. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, pp. 50-51.

92. Haleh Vaziri, op. cit., p. 11.

doctrine. In Lebanon today there exists a consensus among Shi`a jurisprudents on the advocation of Wilayat al-Faqih.[93]

Fadlullah has been less willing than Islamic Amal's Musawi to embrance whole-heartedly the idea of an Islamic republic in Beirut. Fadlullah commented on the possibility of establishing an Iranian-style theocracy in 1985 interview:

> The Iranian leaders are not thinking of an Islamic Lebanon in the least as the media reported. There are some differences... We [the Lebanese] do not have sufficient and necessary conditions for an Islamic Republic.[94]

The following of Hizbollah mushroomed as both the Iranians and their local allies indoctrinated the young and the poor Shi`a peasants through films and "ideological seminars." The decorous Ran el Ain Mosque soon blazoned a sign: "Martyrdom' headquarters". And banners and signs in the streets declaimed: "Death to America," "Martyrdom is the aim and hope of God's worshipers" and "Our revolution is Islamic before being Iranian, and it is the revolution of the oppressed throughout the world.[95]

The fundamentalist- militant groups activated the Shi`a doctrine of martyrdom and self-sacrifice against

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93. As`ad Abu Khalil, op. cit., 1985, p. 51.
94. George Nader, `Interview with Sheikh Muhammad Husayn Fadlullah' Middle East Insight, Vol. 4. No.2. (June/July 1985), p. 51.
95. Wright Robin, op. cit., p. 82.

oppression and operationalized it into direct action. Young Shi`a were exhorted to emulate the much-celebrated martyrdom [96] of Imam Husayn by staging suicide attacks on Israeli and Western targets in Lebanon. Suicide car bombings were carried out against the Israeli forces in November 1983 and continued through 1985, even after their withdrawal to their self-proclaimed security zone in southern Lebanon along Israel's border. The attacks boosted the image of the radical groups as the most prominent element in compelling Israeli's retreat. Similarly, the US and Western troops in Lebanon were primary target. A series of suicide bombing were staged in 1983-84 against the US embassy and the US and French military compounds, prompting the withdrawal of the (MNF) Multi National Force in 1984 and the termination of Western influence in Lebanon.[97]

The ideological and political gap between Amal and Hizbollah had led to armed disagreements between them that

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96. In the language of Qur'an, Martyrdom consists of three elements- namely, eternity, continuous movement towards God, and charismatic leadership as embodied in the Imamate. The Shi`a have a rich history of martyrs. However, the martyrdom of Husayn is considered most important. Husayn died in 680 A.D., on the day of "Ashura"- the tenth day of Muharram-while battling injustice inflicted on the Muslim community by Yazid and his father Mua' wiyya, the founder of the Umayyid Dynasty in Damascus. Like his father `Ali', Husayn rebelled against the Umayyid. For ten days, Husayn and his followers fought in the desert, without food and water, to repel the daily attacks of Umayyid loyalists. In the end, the Umayyid loyalists triumphed, decapitating Husayn's followers and imprisoning women and children. Husayn's martyrdom symbolized the Shi`a struggle against encroachment and the readiness to embrace death.

97. Dr. Mahmud A. Faksh, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

have become a common place since 1985. Tensions were exacerbated by the June-July, 1985 TWA hijacking and by the holding of Western hostages by some radical Shi`a groups linked to Hizbollah,which AMAL opposed. The kidnapping in February 1988 of US Lieutenant-Colonel William Higgins, head of the UN observers team in Lebanon, resulted in clashes between Amal and Hizbollah forces in the south and in Beirut. Fighting broke out again in December 1989 and continued through early 1990 in Iqlim al- Tuffah (southeast of Sidon) for control of strategic Shi`a villages adjacent to the Israeli security zone. Amal has always strongly resisted Hizbollah's attempts to establish a foothold in southern Lebanon, where Amal is the major political and military power. It fears that Hizbollah, under the pretext of continuing the struggle against the Israeli- controlled zone, could radicalize the Shi`a of the south and thereby undermine its position there. In fact, the presence of Israel in the security zone, following its withdrawal in the summer 1985, has continued to provide the basis for violent Israeli-Shi`a confrontation that is playing into the hands of Hizbollah. Despite the radical' mounting threat to Berri, however, Amal retains widespread Shi`a allegiance, enhanced by Syrian backing, even as Syria maintains its alliance with Iran- still Hizbollah's main benefactor.[98]

The Shi`a community has come far since its days as a downtrodden, quietist minority. Over the past three decades

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98. Ibid., pp. 53-54.

it has grown into the biggest, most vigorous militant community. Now it boasts the largest number of believers in Lebanon's sectarian structure and is a contender for power with the Maronites, who are declining in numbers and position. Increasingly, the Shi`a are likely to become the inheritors of Lebanon, as their pre-eminence in the country's confessional configuration is felt more and more.

Although the Ta'if accord of 1989 enhanced the political role established for the speaker, traditionally a Shi`a Muslim who will serve a four- year term. Now the nomination of a prime minister by the president would require consultation with the speaker who conveys the results of binding parliamentary consultations.[99] But the political claims of the Shi`a were blunted in the Ta'if accord in favour of the Sunni Muslims. The Shi`a gained only three of the new appointive seats given to them, like the Sunni Muslims, a total of 22 seats.[100] The Shi`a challenge ahead is to translate their strength into actual political power. This can be done only through a united Lebanon. Indeed, the best guarantee of Shi`a interests is a strong and independent state. It is to the Shi`a advantage to work toward a state with a powerful central government. Only in this way could they preserve their primacy.

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99. Augustus Richad Norton,`Lebanon after Ta`if: Is the Civil War Over ?' Middle East Journal, Vol. 45, No. 3, (Summer, 1991), p. 463. Before Ta`if accord, the speaker served a one year term and was decidedly subordinate to both the prime minister and the President.
100. Ibid., p. 464.

CHAPTER – VI

THE CIVIL WAR

The causes of Lebanese Civil War 1975-90 remained to be resolved. But it has become clear to Lebanon's observers that the war in Lebanon is multi-dimensional; the combination of foreign forces and intervention have intensified the conflict among the Lebanese. This is not to say that the causes of the Lebanese war are purely external in their origins: the Lebanese civil wars are primarily the result of domestic and indigenous conditions that have shaped the political cultures and socio-economic formations of the Lebanese confessional communities. The Lebanese are responsible for the tragedy that befell their small country. As hard as they try to absolve themselves from that responsibility, and as long as they blame their ills on others, an understanding of the war will be obfuscated. The Lebanese wounds are self-inflicted, but the "outsiders," as the Lebanese denote non-Lebanese powers, added salt to these wounds, thereby compounding the pains and delaying recovery.

The internal factors responsible for the conflict are inherently rooted in the Lebanese socio-conomic and political structure. These factors were primarily responsible in polarizing the Lebanese population into two opposing camps. Three such internal factors can be identified that were instrumental in leading upto a situation of civil war. These are: (1) The emergency of Clan divisions in Lebanese society and the coincidence of this

division with the existing religious divisions in Lebanon (2) The rigidity of the Political system and (3) presence of a large number of armed Palestinians. The interrelationship between these three factors is complex and multidimensional and none of these factors operated to the total exlusion of the other at any point of time. Rather, each factor acted upon and reinforced the others and the sum total of the interactions of these three factors had the effect of dividing Lebanon into two irreconcilable and hostile camps, standing on the brink of civil war by the mid-seventies.

THE EMERGENCY OF CLAN AND COMMUNAL DIVISIONS:

Instead of integrating the various sects more firmly into the national economic life, economic development in Lebanon after 1943, has had differing impacts on the Christians and Muslims. Consequently the class division which emerged broadly coincided with the religious divisions.

The most significant aspect of the Lebanese economy before independence was the predominance of service sector (banking,transport, managerial service, communication facilities, tourism and hotels). The Christian sects played a dominant role in this regard. A class of the wealthy traders mostly Christians, engaged in export and import had already established themselves in the port city of Beirut prior to the French mandate. Under French mandatory authority Lebanon rapidly became an entrepot and a centre of

transshipment for Western goods and for the raw material exported to Europe. Consequently a new class of agents, representatives and functionaries of Western capitalist interests, which was once again predominantly Christian, emerged in Lebanon. This class allied itself with the successful import-export merchants and the semi feudal landlords who were slowly turning to the commercial, export-oriented agriculture. Alongwith French mandatory authorities who protected French capitalist interests, these three segments became the ruling classes of Lebanon.[1]

Thus the Christians were the most powerful economic group in Lebanon at the time of independence. By virtue of their economic strength, members of the ruling class by and large came from the Christian community. A white collar urban middle class also existed at the time of independence. This class had arisen with the growth of Western, especially French, investments in Lebanon. In part because they were favoured and also because they spoke the language of the foreigners. This middle class was also principally Christian.[2]

The post independence era enhanced the position of the Christians economically primarily because of two reasons. First, the economy of Lebanon was founded on the raison

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1. Samih Farsoun and Walter Carrol, 'The Civil War in Lebanon : Sect, class and Imperialism', Monthly Review, (New York), vol. 28, no.2, June 1976, p.18.

2. Ibid., p.19.

d'etre of laissez faire, laissez passer`,i.e., total free enterprise for all and almost no governmental intervention in the economy.[3] Second, the fortuitous operation of a number of external factors which increased the dominance of the service sector in the economy stil further.

The creation of Israel in 1948 was the most important of these external factors. With the creation of Israel, Lebanon inherited all of Palestines regional economic functions due to the Arab boycott of Israel. The Arab boycott gave an impetus to Beirut port and the Beirut international airport as well as an added appeal to the Lebanese schools and hospitals for Palestinian and Transjordanian students and patients. Banking and other services were also shifted to Beirut from Jerusalem and the tourist business of the Holy Land began to be routed through Lebanon and Jordan. The creation of Israel turned out to be effective and overshadowed the Lebanese economy. About 1,50,000 Palestinian refugees were forced to take shelter in Lebanon. But all of them were not unskilled `camp' dwellers. Many of them possessed highly specialized skills which in later years helped to attract a large number of foreign-based companies to Lebanon. Moreover, the Palestinian camps provided an inexhaustible supply of cheap labour not covered by state labour legislation and social security.[4] Moreover,

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3. N. Kliot, 'The Collapse of the Lebanese State', Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 23, No.1, (January, 1987), p.67.

4. V. Alanov, 'Origins of Lebanon's Tragedy', International Affairs , No.8, (August , 1979), p.41.

the Iraq Petroleum Company, which until May 1948 had used Haifa in Palestine as an outlet for part of its Petroleum exports, now chose Tripoli in Lebanon as its new outlet, upon the stoppage of the flow of oil through Israel. Similarly ARAMCO used South Lebanon as an outlet for part of its Saudi Oil export, by building a pipeline in 1957 from Saudi Arabia to Lebanon via Jordan and Syria.[5]

Another significant factor which served to increase the role of service sector and consequently strengthen further the Christian dominance in the economy was the mobilization of capital from Egypt, Syria and Iraq into Lebanon as a result of coup d'etats and the subsequent nationalisation of the economy of these three countries.[6]

Another external factor which gave an impetus to the service-sector was the post-war oil-boom that took place in the Arabian peninsula and the Gulf region. As a result of this huge inflow of foreign exchange since the early fifties poured in at the time when the region had very low absorptive and productive capacity. In contrast Lebanon was well-known in the region for its more advanced financial structure. This resulted in the direction of vast sums into Beirut's money market. Bank deposits rose from L 215 million at the end of 1950 to L9,106 million by the end of 1974.[7] The vast majority of the banks were in the hands of

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5. Yusuf A. Sayigh, The Economic of the Arab World, London, 1978, p.285.
6. Ibid., p.289.
7. Ibid., p.289.

the Christians. The fact that funds were concentrated in the hands of one religious community assured their investment in that community's industrial, agricultural, commercial and construction enterprises.[8]

The service sector accounted for 67 percent of the total national income in 1968 whereas this sector employed only 32 per cent of the total labour force. It was followed by industrial sector with the share of 22 percent and agriculture by only 11 percent. Simultaneously 50 percent of the population derived their income from agriculture.[9]

The capital influx into Lebanon created a strong dynamism in the banking sector which in turn helped in promoting real estate, hotel, tourist, and construction industry, while the service-sector boomed, the agriculture sector of the economy on which the majority of the Lebanese Muslims depended, continued to stagnate. Hence agriculture remained as the most neglected sector. This resulted in the sectoral imbalances in Lebanon as it was highlighted by a study conducted by the Institute de-Recherches et de Formation en Vue de Development (IRFED) in 1960. This study classified 70 percent of the localities dominated by Christians in Beirut and Mount Lebanon as being in the

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8. Fuad I. Khuri, 'The Social Dynamics of the 1975-77 War in Lebanon, Armed Forces and Society, Vol.7, No.3, spring 1981, p.390.

9. David C. Smock and Audrey Smock, The Politics of Pluralism: A comparative Study of Lebanon and Ghana, New York, 1975, p.79.

developed category and only 5 percent as under-developed. While 46 per cent of the localities in the North, 35 percent in Bekka and 30 per cent in the South were underdeveloped.[10] In Bekka and South Lebanon (inhabited predominantly by Shi`a) 70 percent of the populace lives in the countryside whereas in the North (which is Sunni), it is slightly lower at 55 percent.[11] These regions have the highest proportion of people depending on agriculture as their source of income and therefore have the lowest income as was estimatd at $3680 in the 1960's.[12] Thus the sectarian implications of the lopsided economic development becomes evident. The position of Muslims was slightly better but the Christian community dominated in the industrial sector.[13]

The uneven economic development brought about a steady flow of Muslim migrants from the rural to the urban areas. The population of Beirut, for instance, rose from 250,000 in the early 1950's to 1.4 million in 1975 when the Lebanese civil war started and the rural to urban migration coutinued to increase until the rural population came down from 65 percent at which it had stood after World War II to no more than 17 percent of the total population at the time outbreak

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10. Ibid., p.97.

11. Mechael W. Suleiman, Political Parties in Lebanon: The Challenge of a Fragmented Political Culture (New York, 1967), p.34.

12. Samih Farsoun and Walter Carrol, op.cit., p.20.

13. Yusuf A. Sayigh, Entrepreneurs of Lebanon , Cambridge 1967, pp 69-80.

of Civil War.[14] Rural to urban migration of Muslims was partly the result of the development in agriculture of export-oriented fruit and vegetable farming which is different from the old type of agriculture producing cereals and requires intensive cultivation and greater investment of captial. Consequently urban capitalists came to have a dominant position in agriculture either by means of ownership of fruit and vegetable orchards or by control of marketing of the produce of such farm.[15] This development led to a majority of Shi`a and Sunni peasantry being displaced from their small land holdings who consequently flocked to the cities in search of livelihood.

The migrant Muslims tended to settle in sectarian clusters which underscored the link between religious and class affiliation. With the pasage of time two poverty belts inhabited predominantly by Muslims sprang up in Lebanon. One surrounding the country itself and other surrounding Beirut. The poverty belt surrounding the country included the southern region, the Akkar region of the North and Bekka. These impoverised areas surrounded the prosperous Christian Mount Lebanon. Muslim migrants coming to Beirut from these regions formed another poverty belt around Beirut which

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14. Jamal Toubi, "Social Dynamics in War-torn Lebanon", The Jerusalem Quarterly, (Jerusalem), no.17, Fall 1980, p.95.

15. Georges Hakim, "The Economic Basis of Lebanese Polity", in Binder ed. no.6, pp. 59-60.

surrounded the rich Christian neighbourhoods in the centre of the city.[16]

The economic growth in Lebanon was initiated by the private sector whereas the public sector remained relatively small and inefficient. On account of predominance of the private sector in the field of education, health and housing services were available to only those who could afford it. The high cost at which these services were provided by the private sector made it prohibitively expensive for people of small means - a feature of social inequality of grave dimension in view of the fact that social inequality in Lebanon was beginning to coincide with religious inequality. It can, therefore, be substantiated from the fact that Muslims were lagging behind the Christians in educational, health and housing faciltities.

This the analysis of the developments in Lebanese economy and its impact on the religious sects clearly highlights the economically deteriorating position of the Muslim section of the population and the strengthening of the economic position of the Christian community. By the 1970s the Muslims in general were poorer than the Christians. Family income of the Christians averaged about 50 percent higher than those of Muslims and some two-thirds higher than those of Shi`a Muslims who were the worst

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16. Halim Barakat, 'The Social Context', P. Edward Haley and Lewis (ed) Lebanon in Crisis: Participants and Issues , New York, 1979, p.10.

affected by the distorted economic development.[17] What might have been simply a conflict of interests among social classes elsewhere, in Lebanon came to take on a sectarian and communal colour.[18]

The Civil War of 1958 gave an indication of the dangers inherent in class and religious structure in Lebanon.[19] The feeling among Muslims that whereas their socio-economic status had deteriorated that of the Christians had significantly improved since independence and further that the government itself was doing precious little to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor was the major source of Muslim animosity.[20] However, after the Civil War of 1958, the new President Fuad Shihab tried to bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth among the Christians and Muslims. But Shihab's attempts to regulate the economy were resisted by the powerful Christian oligarchy on the grounds that the regulation of freedom even if it took the mild form of 'putting order into freedom' would inevitably lead the country to socialism.[21]

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17. Riad B. Tabbarah, "Background to the Lebanese Conflict", International Journal of Comparative Sociology, (Toronto) vol. 20, nos. 1-2, March-June 1979, p.117.

18. Albert Y. Badre, "Economic Development of Lebanon" in Charles A. Cooper and Sidney S. Alexander eds. Economic Development and Population Growth in the Middle East (New York, 1972), p.199.

19. For an indepth analysis of the civil-war of 1958 see Fahim I. Qubain, Crisis in Lebanon (Washington , D.C. 1961).

20. David R. Smock and Audrey Smock, op.cit., p.79.

21. Yusuf A. Sayigh, op.cit., 1978, p.306.

Thus the contradications between various religious groups became sharper and sharper and the interrelationship between various sects could not be reconciled.

RIGID POLITICAL SYSTEM:

The major demands of the Lebanbese Muslims had been that the sectarian allocation of parliamentary, cabinet and administrative posts which was based on the French sponsored census of 1932 had become obsolete and did not reflect the true demographic situation, hence it had to be changed. They claimed that the size of the different sects had undergone tremendous change because of Christians migration to the West and the higher fertility rate of the Muslims, especially the Shi'a. Even if the claim of Muslims of the Christian out-migration is not taken into consideration, the differential fertility rates of the Christians and Muslims cannot be ovrlooked. On the basis of the most reasonable assumptions regarding rates of growth between 1932-1971, at the outbreak of the Lebanese conflict in 1975 the Christian community formed less than 43 percent of the total population, while the Muslim community had risen to over 57 percent. The Shi'a who had constituted 20 percent of the total population in 1932 and ranked third behind the Maronites and the Sunnis now constituted 28 percent of the total population and were thus the largest single group in the country.[22]

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22. Riad B. Tabbarah, op.cit., pp.111-112.

There was a minor change in the appointment to civil services in 1958 under constant pressure from the Muslims. Even the 5 to 6 ratio was not followed in the civil services before 1958. For example Maronite Christians who constituted 29 percent of the Lebanese population 1958, held approximtely 50 percent of government posts.[23] It was in 1958 that the government decided that Muslims and Christians be equally appointed in the civil services. However, political representation between Christians and Muslims remained the same. Wehereas both the size of parliament and the number of electoral districts, i.e. constituencies have changed frequently since indpendence what has remained constant is the proportional representation of Muslims and Christians.[24] No doubt the religious ratio has changed in favour of the Muslims but the Christian elites never allowed a new census and strongly objected to any suggestion for amendment of the constitution. They insisted that the President of the Republic be a Maronite.[25] If a new census is taken and a fresh division of the parliamentary seats is made on the basis of such a census, the Christians, particularly Maronites will loose their monopoly of political power that they now enjoy. But the political

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23. Kamal. Salibi, 'Lebanon under Fuad Chehab 1958-64' Middle Eastern Studies , vol, 2, No.3, (April, 1960), p.215.

24. This is the reason why the total number of parliamentary seats has always been a factor of 11 changing from 44 to 55 to 66 to 77 as it is at present.

25 Halim Barakat, op.cit., p.13.

under-representation of Muslims only served to enhance their alienation still further from the political system.

Socio-economic changes had resulted in the emergence of various new political forces but there was little or no accommodation of these new political forces within the existing framework of the political system. This was reflected in the great disparity between popular support for progressive political parties (vize., the Communists, Sociolists, and the Syrian Social Nationalists.) and their representation in parliament. This disparity arose due to the nature of Lebanese electoral laws. List system is a permanent feature of the elctoral laws of Lebanon since independence. The constituencies are usually multi-member in Lebanon and from each constituency more than one representatives are elcted. Electoral allliances worked out in individual constituencies are called 'lists'. Alliances between candidates forming a 'list' is in terms of what strength each candidate bering to the 'list'. Normally geographical, sectarian and family considerations are upper-most in the formulation of a 'list'. These alliances are neither permanent nor ideological and in many cases they crystallize at the last moment before the election and generally break as soon as the elctions are over.[26]

In fact the 'list system' helped to perpetuate the

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26. Abdo I. Baaklini, Legislative and Political Development Lebanon, 1842-1972,(Durham, 1972), p.147.

dominance of the traditional leaders and notabls in Lebanese politics and prevented the emergence of ideologically oriented political parties. Political parties in general cannot insure that their members can be relied upon to vote for the whole 'list' regardless of the nature of the alliance they enter into. If their candidates are to have a chance of winning an election, they have to join a 'list'. But joining a 'list' will certainly involve compromises with local leaders and forces that are considered by these parties to be traditional, feudal or even reactionary. Their cooperation may face the prospects of insubordination and even defection of the cadres. If they do not cooperate they are certain to lose the election and possibly leave their followers frustrated. This is the reason why only non-doctrinnaire, compromising sectarian political parties have been able to send their representatives to the parliament.[27]

Simultaneously, electoral law also worked against the ideological political parties. It bound the voter to his village according to this law a Lebanese citizen, irrespective of where he was living or for how long, could exercise his right to vote only in the place of his birth. That is, if he wanted to vote he should go back to his home town to exercise this right.[28] The rural population had come

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27. Ibid., p.148.

28. Fuad Faris, "The Civil War in Lebanon", Race and Class (London), vol. 18, no.2, Autumn 1976, p.176.

down to a mere 17 percent of the total population as a result of migration. The vast majority of the migrants belonged to the poor and economically deprived classes. It is among these poor Muslims that the ideological parties spread their influence. Had these migrants been allowed to vote in the cities, then the ideological parties would have been successful in sending their members to the parliament.[29]

It is evident that the poor Muslim migrants from the peripheral areas of the country living in the poverty belts around Beirut and other cities could not usually afford to travel back to their districts of origin just for the sake of casting a ballot. They found little point in voting for people far removed from their places of work and unresponsive to their day to day problems. This led to their alienation from the electoral process and therefore from the process of government as a whole.[30]

The secular political organiztions were suppressed on the ground of preserving the Lebanese identity. This had two consequences First, the electoral system only served to further strengthen the sectarian forces and loyalties. Thus resulted in weakening the state and its institutions. This fact has been highlighted by Elie Salem in his study on

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29. Ibid., p.176.

30. Fuad I. Khuri, op.cit., p.392.

cabinet politics in Lebanon.[31] Due to the weakness of the state institutions, many ideological and sectarian parties and religious sects began to establish paramilitary groups (know as militias), to be the coercive arm of the party or sect often against state intervention. They justified their militias by claiming that it would be used to protect the state and its interests. Their claim itself was in fact an admission of the state's weakness and lack of trust in the government.[32] Second, as the new political forces could not enter the political arena in the existing form, they began to advocate the overthrow of the political system itself.

The Muslims were already discriminated against in the political sphere. After independence the economic development of Lebanon was such that it went in favour of Maronite Christians. The class division that emerged in independent Lebanon broadly coincided with the religious divide to the existing political discrimination against Muslims and added to economic frustration which proved to be highly detrimental for the confessional system. Consequently, it was in the Palestinians presence that the Muslims found a convenient tool in their efforts to challenge the Christian hegemoney.

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31. According to Elie Salem traditional families and local leaders have more control of their followers than the central government. All religious and ethnic groups have their own pyramid of power and their own internal sources of strength and it is with these pyramids that the cabinet must deal and at times even negotiate. For detail see Elie Salem Cabinet Politics in Lebanon' Middle East Jornal , Vo.21, (Fall, 1967), p.496.

32. Fuad I. Khuri, op.cit., p.394.

PALESTINIANS IN THE CIVIL WAR:

Although Lebanon officially stayed out of the 1948, 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars, it was never isolated from them. Each conflict swelled the number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.[33] Such an influx was bound to cause trouble in a country where the relative numerical strength of the Christian and Muslim communities was a subject of bitter political argument. Their attitude was officially that they did not interfere in Lebanese affairs, and they could not see that their very presence was an interference. They were certainly not interested in any internal conflict: their aim was to have a base from which to wage their compaign for the restoration of their homeland. Against their will and inclination, their policies drew them inexorably into conflict with the Lebanese Right, who feared their growing power and saw them as an army of occupation in alliance with the Lebanese Left.[34] Thus, their presence in Lebanon involved them in the Civil War which started in 1975.

The Palestinian resistance movement started in the middle and late 1960s. The resistance movement had widspread popular support among the Lebanese in the coastal

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33. Yussef M. Ibrahim,'The sorrow of Lebanon' The Link, vol.11, No.5, New York, (Winter 1978), p.3.

34. John Bulloch, Death of a Country: The Civil War in Lebanon, London 1977, p.2.

cities,especially among the poor and middle classes conscious of their Arab identity. This support was probably strongest among the Sunnis but was also evident among Shi'a and Greek Orthodox. It was very popular among students and intelligentsia.[35]

But the popularity and support the resistance movement received appeared as potentially dangerous and destabilizing factor to many other Lebanese, particularly the Maronites of Mt Lebanon who placed higher priority on their Maronite national identity than on Arabism. It was also a political threat to the principal traditional Maronite leades, notably Camille Sham'un , who not only saw pan-Arabism as a threat to "their" Lebanon but also perceived that the Palestinians might catalyze a movement for change among those segments of the Lebanese population who were either frozen out of effective participation or limited by custom to an inferior position vis-a-vis the Maronites. The resurgence of the Maronite parties in the spring 1968 elections, just after the Palestinians' psychological victory over the Israelis at Karama, was perhaps one sign of this apprehension. The new Christian militias included Sulayman Franjiyah's Zyhorta Liberation Army, and Camille Sham'un's National Liberal Party "Tigers" and the Kata'ib. The civil war in Jordan in September 1970 intensified Maronite fears of the

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35. Michael C. Hudson, 'The Palestinian Factor in the Lebanese Civil War", The Middle East Journal, vol.32, No.3, (Summer, 1978), p.264.

Palestinians considerably. Just as the Palestinian guerrillas were falling back into Lebanon to regroup after losing their confrontation with King Hussein, so too were the Christian militias beginning to arm themselve for what they must have seen as a probable future conflict, and one in which they could not count on the Lebanese army, given the fact that its own iternal cleavages mirrored those of the country in general. Acording to one study, during the five years after Black September (1970) "the Christians were already arming themselves rapidly, smuggling in M 16 rifles, Czech M 58 rifles and other small arms they could fire, and spending their evenings in arms drill.[36]

It appears that the later half of 1973, Maronite leaders began actively preparing for a showdown with the Palestinians.[37] Although, from the beginning of the resistence movement, the Maronites, in the form of the Phalangist Party, saw the possibilities: if the Palestinians were not subjugated quickly, they would provide the muscle which the growing Leftist movement lacked. So, from 1969 onwards, when the first open clash between the Palestinians and the Rightists occurred, the Phalangist aim was clear: the Palestinians had to be stopped, if possible they should be sent out of the country, dispersed through all the Arab States and not concentrated into one. If that was not possible then they had to be 'controlled'.[38]

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36. Ibid., pp. 264-265.
37. Ibid., p.266.
38. John Bulloch, op.cit., p.4.

Throughout 1973, fierce battles were fought between the Palestinians fedayeen and the Lebanese army, but Lebanon's President, Sulaiman Franjieh, fearing a mutiny by Muslim soldiers in his army, refrained from ordering a general assault. The result was further frustration and each camp began to arm itself to the teeth. Palestinian refugee camps brimmed with weapons and ammunition. As mentioned earlier, the more nationalistic of the Christians, pre-judging the army's ineffectiveness, imported their own arms to do the job themselves. The Lebanese Muslim groups turned to the Palestinians for arms and support.[39] Thus by spring 1973 there were clear signs of a Palestinian-Christian rightwing confronation in the making, as the Kata'ib , the President, the Christian army officers and other conservative Maronite groups began to challenge the Palestinians openly and violently, and at the same time sought to reduce the power of the Muslims elite.[40]

The mounting internal tension intensified as a result of the clashes between the Lebanese army and the demonstrators in Sidon protesting on 26 February 1975, against the government's granting of a liecence to a fishing enterprise (The Protein Company) which they maintained would affect the livlihood of the local fishermen (mostly

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39. Youssef M. Ibrahim, op.cit., p.3.

40. Michael C. Hudson, 'The Lebanese Crisis: the limits of consociational Democracy', Journal of Palestine Studies, vol 5, No.,3-4, (Spring/Summer 1976), pp. 116-117.

muslims).[41] In the clash an army corporal was killed and the Sidon leader Maruf Sad, who was walking at the head of the demonstration, received a serious bullet wound which later brought about his death. On 29 February, the Sidon populce, which accused the army authorities of responsibility for the shooting of Maruf Sad, organized a demonstration in the city and blocked the main road leading out of Sidon in the direction of Tyre. When Army troops arrived to remove the road block on the grounds that it obstructed essential military movements along the coastal road to and from the Israeli border, armed civilians who appear to have included at least some Palestinians from the nearlby camp of Ayn al-Hulwa, opened fire on the troops.[42] This tension constituted the immediate background for the incident, which occurred in Ain-Rummanah, in Beirut on 13 April 1975, and which triggered the Lebanese civil war.

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41. Sirriyyeh Hussein, "The Palestinian Armed Presence in Lebanon since 1967", Owen, Roger(ed) Essay on the crisis in Lebanon, Ithaca Press London, 1976, p.82. and on fishing dispute also see Paul D. Starr, "Lebanese Fishermen and the Dilemma of Modernization", in M. Estellie Smith (ed), Those who Live From the Sea St. Paul, Minn : American Ethnological Society and West Publishing Company 1977.

42. Good analyses of the praximate causes of the war and its early phases include Kamal Salibi, Crossroads to Civil War : Lebanon 1958-1976 , Samih Farsoun, "Lebanon Explodes", MERIP REPORTS , no.44, February 1976, and Halim Barakat, Lebanon in Strife: Student Preludes to the Civil War , Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977.

The first stage extended from 13 April 1975, when the incident of Ain-Rummanah took place, to the formation of Lebanese military cabinet on 23 May under the premiership of Brigadier Nur-eddin Rifai. During this stage, the conflict was primarily between the Phalange party and the Palestinian resistance.

The second stage began with the rejection of the military cabinet by Lebanese Muslim leadership communicated to President Franjieh by Kamal Junbalat on 24 May. As a result, Brigadier Rifai submitted the resignation of his cabinet on 25 May and Rashid Karami was entrusted, on 28th May, with the formation of a new cabinet, on 30 June, which was preceded by a three-hour meeting between Yasir Arafat and Presdient Franjieh, in which it was agreed to enforce the 'Cairo Agreement' of 1969 as well as that of May 1073. Moreover, Arafat also agreed to give a statement of policy on the part of the PLO concerning Palestiian- Lebanese relations. This statement which was broadcast on Lebanese radio and television on 25 June, maintained that the Palestinians would unconditionally support Lebanese sovereignty, that they would not get involved in Lebanese affairs, that they would not support any Lebanese faction against the other, and that they acknowledged that the resistance movement depended on the security and stability of Lebanon. The PLO leadership attempted to make a balance between sticking to the above-declared Palestinian policy and giving limited support to the Muslim and Leftist groups

in order to guarantee, in return, the latter's support to the Palestinian militry presence in Lebanon.

The blockade of the two Palestinian camps opened a third stage in the Palestinian involvement by pulling the resistance into the fighting on a large scale, thus restoring the Palestinian dimension to the civil war. On the Palestinian level this development reduced the polarization between the PLO's and 'Rejection Front's' stances in the war by pushing them both in the direction of more military involvement. The fighting escalated rapidly when Phalangist forces besieged the Palestinian refugee camp of Dhbai, north of Bierut, and occupied it on 13 January. On the same day, the Lebanese Maronite leadership held a summit meeting in Ba'abda, after which they issued a statement, which maintained that the present conflict in Lebanon was a Palestinian-Lebanese one. In response to the Phalangist blockade of the camps, Muslims and leftist forces, aided by Palestinian resistance, blockaded the Christian town of Damour and the village of Al-Jiyya, south of Beirut. At this stage, and by the time the Phalangist forces committed what was later called the 'Quarantine Massacre' in Beirut on 18 January, the Lebanese and the Palestinian dimensions of the war became more intertwined through the heightened involvement of the resistance forces in the fighting. However, in view of the continuation of the conflict in spite of the announcement of the above 'Declartion',

Brigadier Aziz Ahdab attempted to make a coup d'etat on 1 March 1976, and demanded the resignation of both the President and the Prime Minister. The persistent refusal of President Franjieh to resign triggered a new stage in the escalation of fighting in the country.

During the early phase of the new fourth stage, the resistance played a two sided role. On the one hand, the PLO leadership attempted to ease the rising tension between Syria, which was trying to stablise the conflict situation, and Muslims and leftist groups, which were escalating the fighting in an attempt to force the resignation of President Franjieh. On the other hand, the resistance forces, mainly from the 'Rejection Front' , were participating in the fighting on the side of the Muslims and leftist groups. Later, during this stage, and in view of the actual syrian intervention and of Palestinian anticipation of Syrian attempts to reach another settlement over the Golan Heights, there occurred a shift in alliances among the Palestinians resistance organiztions. In parts of the country some Palestinian forces in the Syrian-controlled Al Sa'iqa and the Palestine Liberation Army acted as a buffer, to separate the fighting forces on either side. There were also instances in which some Palestinian elements from these organizations were reported to have participated in the fighting on the side of the Christian forces.

Since the outbreak of the civil war various outside

powers and forces have intervened overtly or covertly on one side or the other. Syria was the first which intervened in 1976, the Israelis in 1978 and again in 1982, and finally - as "peacekeepers" - Western Multi - National Force (MNF) led by, the United Stats in 1983. Of them all, Syria has been the most determined. From 1975 and despite some internal opposition and repeated edxternal pressures, it has refused to budge on its Lebanese involvement. Syria has become stronger in Lebanon each year, giving Damascus a pivotal role in the search for a solution to the crisis. All parties, inside Lebanon and out, acknowledge that Syria's position in Lebanon is at its zenith, and hence its influence on Lebanon's future is paramount.

SYRIAN INVOLVEMENT:

Syrian involvement in Lebanon has been due to its conviction that Syria and Lebanon are indivisible. It is universally accepted that historically the whole of present day Lebanon has been a part of Syria. The name "Suria" referred not just to an area that included Syria and Lebanon. But also to Israel and Jordan and parts of South eastern Turkey. It is this vast territory which is sometimes referred to as "Greater Syria"

The "Greater Syria" of yesteryears continues to permeate the psyche not only of the Syrian elite but also and more broadly, of Syria's general public. They feel that

their country: Greater Syria[43] was unjustly divided by the French in order to create the so-called modern state of Lebanon. In fact Lebanon came into existence only on September 1, 1920 when General Gouraud proclaimed the "independence" of Greater Lebanon". Greater Lebanon included the areas for which Maronite Christians had been clamouring, i.e. the Bekka valley in the east, Jabel Amil in the South, and the coastal areas including the towns of Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre. Syrian nationalist leaders as indicated earlier regarded it as an arbitrary unjust and unnatural dismemberment of their homeland.[44] The Syrians are generally still inclined to hold to the belief that their country's boundary with Lebanon was artificially drawn up by France to suit the latter's colonial ambitions and interests. President Asad echoed an almost universally held Syrian perception when he once said that "throughout history Syria and Lebanon have been one country and one people.[45]

Besides the historical claim, Syrian leaders especially President Asad regard Lebanon as vital to their national interests whether military, political, economic or strategic. Moreover, Lebanon's pluralist society and its democratic system provided an antithesis to the Syrian

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43. Adeed Dawisha, 'The Motives of Syria's involvement in Lebanon', The Middle East Journal , vol.38, No.2, (Spring, 1984), p.229.

44. Leila M.T. Meo, Lebanon: Improbable Nation, Bloomignton, 1965, p.47.

45. Adeed Dawisha, op.cit., p229.

political system, notably to Asad's autocratic rule. No wonder Beirut became a haven for Syrian opposition groups who bitterly attacked the rulers of Damascus and often tried to overthrow them. President Asad has always been anxious to eliminate these elements. Moreover, he has always wanted to control the various PLO groups which in the late 1970s transferred their headquarters from Jordan to Beirut and established their military bases in Southern Lebanon. This objective has been a part of the "Greater Syria strategy" in which Asad intended to employ the PLO as well as to use Lebanese territory for both defensive and offensive purposes vis-a-vis Israel. Thus following his ascendancy to power Asad pursuing his Greater Syria policy sought to extend his influence over Lebanon if not to turn it into a Syrian protectorate.[46]

The Lebanese Civil War started in 1975. It provided opportunity for Syria to realise its goal in Lebanon. In the initial stages of the conflict Syria supported Palestinians and the Lebanese leftists with arms and diplomatic intervention aimed at forestalling the formation of an anti-Palestinian military government. At the same time Syria also established itself as a mediator tried to restrain its clients, and engineered compromise agreements meant to dampen the Civil War. Syria was thus trying to contain the

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46. Ma'oz Moshe, Asad: The sphinx of Damascus, London, 1988, pp. 123-124.

crisis on the one hand and used it to insert a Syrian presence in Lebanese politics on the other.[47]

Toward the end of 1975, when the Lebanese crisis took an ominous turn and threat of partition and Israeli intervention mounted, Syria more overtly asserted its interest in Lebanese events for it saw a chance to realize their dream of Greater Syria.[48] This prompted Abd al- Halim Khaddam, the foreign Minister of Syria, to warn the Maronites of the dangers of partition: "Lebanon" he said, "was part of Syria before the French Mandate. Syria will recover it the moment a serious partitioning attempts gets under way.[49] However, in early 1976 Lebanese rightist forces taking this as a bluff launched an offensive aimed at carving out a Maronite mini-state. Syrian controlled Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) crossed the border, curbed the rightist advance and imposed a cease-fire.[50] Syrian involvement in Lebanese civil war succeeded in maintaining the integrity of Lebanon and prevented its partition. Thus, it prevented the emergence of a Christian mini-state that could be natural ally of Israel.

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47. Raymond Hinnebusch, 'Syrian Policy in Lebanon and the Palestinians, Arab Studies Quarterly, vol.8, No.1, (Winter, 1986), pp.4-5.

48. Ibid., p.5.

49. Mahmud A. Faksh, 'Syria's role in Lebanon', Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, vol.19, No.4, (Summer, 1986), p. 12.

50. Raymond A. Hinnebusch, op.cit., p.5.

Syria was opposed to a military solution to the Lebanese Civil War. It advocated instead national reconciliation between various factions on the basis of the essentially Lebanese formula la ghalib wa la maghlub "no winner and no loser" which would preserve the country's pluralism.[51]

In keeping with this approach Asad put forth a peace plan[52] that provided a moderate redistribution of power in favour of Muslims and disengagement of Palestinians from Lebanon's internal affairs.[53] But the Lebanese Left rejected the plan and radical Palestinians supported them. These radical Palestinians intended to turn Lebanon into a base for their struggle against Israel. The mainstream PLO under Arafat began to view Syria's growing intervention in Lebanon as a threat to the Palestinian autonomy essential to Palestinian interest.[54] To safeguard the interests of the Palestinians a Palestinian-left counter offensive was launched to defeat the design of the Maronites on the one hand and put an end to the Syrian peace plan on the other. Syria was however, angered and decided to chastise the Palestinian-left forced in collaboration with the Lebanese

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51. Mahmud A. Faksh, op.cit., p.13.

52. According to this plan seats in the parliament were to be incrased and equally divided between Christian and Muslims. However no change was to be effected in presidency which was to remain in the hands of Christians. Christians accepted this plan.

53. Raymond A. Hinnebusch, op.cit., p.5.

54. Ibid., p.5.

government. In June 1976 at the request of the Lebanese government Asad dispatched 30,000 Syrian troops to support a Maronite war of attrition and finally launched a massive offensive that swept deep into Lebanon in a major fight against Palestinian forces.[55]

But the Syrian-Maronite honeymoon ended in 1978 when relations between the two were strained with the emergence of Bashir Jumayyil as the leader of the Lebanese Front. He asked Syria to withdraw. Asad switched side again, joined hands with the Palestinians and successfully checked the growing power of the Maronites. Moreover, he eliminated his enemy Kamal Junbalat and endeared himself to those factions of the National Movement which were beholden to his regime.

The situation, however, changed after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982. In 1983, Syria encouraged a split in PLO because relations between Arafat and Asad had become strained. Arafat weakened by the Israeli invasion wanted to pursue a dialogue with Egypt a stance that threatened the cornerstone of Syrian policy namely to prevent the legitimation of Camp David Accord.[56] The relations of Syria with PLO further deteriorated in 1985 when Arafat joined hands with King Hussein in proposing negotiations with Israel on the question of West Bank. Syria's relations with radical Palestinians who were aligned

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55. Ibid., p.7.

56. Ibid., p.13.

with Damascus also took a new turn when Asad backed Shi'a attack on Palestinian camps in Lebanon.[57] Syria supported Amal militias (a Shi'a militia founded by Imam Musa Sadr) during the war of camps from 1985 to 1987. The Amal militia led by Mr.Nabi Berri feared that the large scale return of PLO meant a definite setback to their own political and military position inside Lebanon. Asad supported Amal mainly due to his personal grievances against Mr.Arafat. Moreover, he feared that the re-entry of PLO fighter loyal to Arafat might creat further problems for Syria.[58]

However, in 1988 Syria was forced to stop its proxy Amal from attacking PLO fighters entrenched in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon because of the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occuppied territories which earned Arab as well as world sympathy for the Palestinian cause.[59]

Soon after the conflict with PLO Asad decided to use Amal to discipline the Hizbollah, a radical Shi'a group, which opposed Syria's policy in Lebanon. He directed Amal to crush th Hizbollah in South Lebanon where the later had been escalating attacks on Israel and the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army. Having succeeded in South Lebanon Asad engaged Amal to suppress the Hizbollah in the Southern suburbs of

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57. Ibid., p.17.

58. The Hindu, 9 April, 1987.

59. The Middle East and North AFrica, 36th edition, 1990, p.605.

Beirut.[60] However, Hizbollah proved strong enough to be defeated by the Amal in this region. On the contrary they the Hizbollah wrested control of about 90 percent of the 36 sq km, Amal controlled southern suburb of Beirut from Nabi Berri's forces.[61] This prompted Asad to order his troops to help the Amal militia. On May 13,1988 Syrian troops attacked Hizbollah positions pushed them back from their newly occupied territories but failed to break the bone of their military power. As a resuwlt Hizbollah is still powerful in Lebanon.

The latest challenge to Syria's Lebanon policy came from General Michel Aoun who was appointed Prime Minister of Lebanon on September 22, 1988 by President Mr. Amin Gemayel just before the expiry of his term in office and after the failure of a Syrian plan to get elected a President of their own choice.[62] Lebanese Muslims however rejected Aoun's government and continued to recognise the government of the acting premier Salim al-Hoss. This led to a bitter controversy and there was a potential threat to Lebanon's unity and integrity. General Aoun, however, remained adamant and in March 1989 demanded the withdrawal of all Syrian forces from Lebanon. He also declared that he would wage a "War of Liberation" against Asad's forces until Syria

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60. The Middle East, August 1988, No.166, p.12.

61. The Middle East and North Africa, op.cit., p.605.

62. The Middle East, November 1988, No.169, p.9.

complied. He blocked the Lebanese ports used by Syria's allies mainly for commercial purposes. Consequently, a fierce fighting started on March 14, 1989 between Christian army under Michel Aoun and Syrian forces backed by the militias supporting Syrian stand.

TA'IF AGREEMENT:

Alarmed at development in Lebanon on May 25, 1989 heads of Arab states met in Casablanca in order to find out a lasting solution to the crisis and bring about a peace in the country.[63] But they failed to bring about any acceptable solution.

Again on October 22, 1989 at the initiative of Saudi Arabia 62 surviving Deputies of Lebanon's 99-members parliament gathered in Ta'if and agreed on a plan for the re-establishment of the Lebanese constitutional state. This plan in known as Taif Agreement. The salient features of this agreement were the transfer of executive power from the (Christian) President to a Cabinet composed of equal number of Christian and Muslim ministers. The cabinet was to be responsible to the parliament which was to be re-constituted with equal number of Christian and Muslim deputies. The existing confessional distribution of the principal offices of the state was, however, to remain unchanged. It called for "the liberation of Lebanon from the

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63. Strategic Survey, 1989-1990, p.98.

Israeli occcupation" and "distinctive relations between Lebanon and Syria," as two independent Arab states. Syria insisted that it had legitimate security interests in Lebanon. Hence the Taif Agreement stipulated that Syrian withdrawal to the Bekka Valley should be possible only two years after political reforms are implemented.[64] The agreement was rejected by General Aoun. But Syria supported the Agreement. with full support of Syria. Deputies of Leobanese parliament met at Qlaiaat air-base in Syrian-controlled northern Lebanon. They ratified the agreement and elected Rene Mouwad as the new President of Lebanon. But on November 22, 1989, Rene Mouwad was killed. Two days later Elias Hrawi was elected to succeed Mouwad. The President dismissed General Aoun from his post as Commanding Officer of the Lebanon's armed forces. Syria supported the move and was ready to provide military assitance and troops to the President to evict Aoun from the Presidential palace. However, Aoun managed to surround the palace with a human shield which frustrated Hrawi's move to.

The Gulf crisis, precipitated by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, had serious repurcussions from Lebanon. On 28 September 1990 units of the Lebanese army loyal to the government imposed an economic blockade on the areas of Beirut which were under the control of Gen Michel

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64. Pof Massoud Daher, The Japanese Institute of Middle Eastern Economics, No.11, (Winter, 1991), Cairo, p.38.

Aoun. The blockade, which enjoyed Syrian and U.S. support, was designed to force Aoun into either cooperating with al-Huss Government, or evacuating the presidential palace at Baabda, where he was based. On 13 October 1990 Syrian forces commmenced a military assault against the presidential palace at Baabda and other strategic areas under Aoun's control. In a clear breach of the 'Red Lines' agreement[65] betwseen Syria and Israel, which regulated the parameters within which each country could operate in Lebanon, the Syrian air force shelled the presidential palace. The Syrian military operation was the first of the repurcussions of the Gulf crisis in Lebanon, where Syria had been granted freedom of action as a reward for its participation in the US-led multinational force deployed in Saudi Arabia. Aoun forces were completely defeated, and the areas under his control overrun.[66] The defeat of Aoun ended the challenge which he posed to the Syrian hegemony over Lebanon.

It can be rasonably concluded from the above discussion that the Syrian involvement in the Lebanese civil war ensured the unity of Lebanon and prevented its partition along religious lines. Syrian involvement also maintained a power-balance between various militias and no single militia could become so powerful as to defeat other one. Although, Amal always sided with Syria but the latter did never allow

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65. The Middle East and North Africa 1992, 38th edition, London, 1991, p.650.

66. Ibid., p.650.

the former to completly crush Hizbollah. Moreover, it is due to the support of Syria that Gen Michel Aoun was defeated and Taif Agreement could be implemented which envisaged the moderate distribution of power between Muslims and Christians.

ROLE OF ISRAEL:

Israel concern with ending the armed Palestinians presence on her northern borders drew her gradually into open involvement in the Lebanese Civil War. By early summer 1976 considerable transfers of tanks, vehicles, artillery, and other military equipment had been made by Israel to the rightists. Israeli patrols frequently crossed into south Lebanon to discourage Palestinian activity in the region and to protect the Israeli "open fence"[67] border crossing.[68]

Israel's interest in establishing a Maronite - dominated state in Lebanon, controlling the Litani River, and annexing southern Lebanon[69] have long historical

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67. Israel since early summer 1976, had permitted Lebanese, mainly Maronites, but also some of the poor Shi`a residents of the south, to enter Israel for work, business, medical treatment, and visits to relatives.

68. Walid Khalidi, Conflict and Violence in Lebanon: Confronation in the Middle East, Harvard University Press, Harvard, 1983, p.1972

69. Plans for acquiring the Litani were articulated soon after Israel came into being in 1948. One prominent Zionist scholar wrote :"In order to have resources sufficient to allow it to ;perform its proper function in solving the Jewish problem, Palestine (e.g., the Jewish state) needed control of the Litani waters as well as agricultural land east of the river.

precedents. But these objectives were found not feasible until mid-1970s.

When Lebanbon was wrecked by Civil War, Israel perceived the necessity to support Phalangist secessionist tendencies. Because a Maronite state with a religious raison d'etre would be a natural ally of Israel.[70]

To achieve the above objectives, Israel developed close relations with Bashir Gemayel, who commanded the largest Christian militia in Lebanon, the Kata'ib, the military wing of the Phalange Party. As early as 1977 Gemayel began to receive direct military aid from Israel which reached over &100 million by 1982. Large numbers of Gemayel's men received training in Israel, and Israel provided the Phalange with sophisticated weapons as well as political and military advice. In addition, Israel supported the renegade major Saad Haddad with arms, money, and advice, after installing him as commander of the area of southern Lebanon it conquered during its 1978 invasion. Through Haddad, Israel solidified its control over a significant portion of Lebanese territory, and Haddad's militia gradually became fully integrated into the Israeli Defence Forces(IDF)[71].

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70. Mahmud A. Faksh, `Syria Role in Lebanon`, Journal of South ASian and Middle Eastern Studies,, Vol. 9, No.4 (Summer, 1986), p.16.

71. Cheryl A. Rubenbery, `The Israeli Invasion of Lebanon: Objectives and consedquences,` Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 8, No.2, (Winter, 1984), p.7-8.

Israeli's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982 - "Operation Peace for Galilee"- was initially declared to be a campaign avowedly to end permanently the Palestinian `threat' to its norther borders. The PLO forces were to be driven out of "Fatah Land" and there would be a twenty - five mile wide security zone in souther Lebanon. But the invaders went on to encircle Beirut and push the Syrians out of the central mountains around the city. Their forces were directly opposite Syria's in the eastern Bekka[72] region and within twenty miles of Damascus.[73]

Israeli's quick military successes and evacuation of PLO and Syrian forces from Beirut exposed its real aims. Sharon, the architect of the invasion, planned to destory the PLO militarily and politically, to oust the Syrians, and to create a Maronite - dominated central government. This would pave the way for a state with enough authority to establish order and to sign a peace treaty antecedent to normalizing relations with Israel.[74]

The emergent Martonite - Israel alliance, represented by Gemayel and Sharon, conducted a compaign to change some

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72. In geopolitical terms, the Bekka is the soft belly of Syria, and whoever controls it controls the southern half of Syria. Also the region is the source of the two major rivers, the Jordan river which flows south into Jordan, and Orontes which flows North into Syria

73. Mahmud A. FAksh, op.,cit., p.17.

74. Ibid., p.17.

fundemental political and strategic realities in the Middle East. Israel sought to translate its battlefield victories into political advantage by way of influencing development in Lebanon in its favour. The Maronites seiged the opportunity to gain ascendancy and establish their dominance. As a result, Lebanon would be removed from the traditional Syrian zone of influence in particular and the Arab systems in general.[75]

However, subsequent events have shown that Israel's objectives could not be realized because they were based on a misunderstanding of political realities in Lebanon... It was not long before Israel realized the limits of its powers to shape Lebanon'spolitical realities. Its military power could not produce the desired changes in a hostile environment highly charged with conflicting forces and loyalties and ever-changing alignments. Nor could its allies, the Maronite Lebanese forces, establish their control over areas occupied by Israel. Contrary to Israeli expectations, the Phalangist Maronites' power was limited as witnessed in the fighting in the Chouf mountains against the Druze during the summer and fall of 1983, and later against the Shi'a militia in West Beirut during the winter of 1984. In both conflicts, the Druze and the Shi'a emerged triumphant, and that the Christians of Lebanon were no longer assured of ascendance because of demographic

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75. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

conditions unfavourable to them and because of strong Muslim opposition. Accordingly, other than helping along the election to the presidency of the pro-Israeli Phalangist leader Bashir Gemayel - whose assassination shortly before his inauguration in September 1982 was a major blow to Israeli strategy.[76] While for a time the Phalange appeared to be in firm control- although Bashir Gemayel reneged on the military support he had promised the Israelis during the fighting and had began to distance himself from Israel soon after his election, and Amin Gemayel turned to the US for support specifically to counter Israeli influence - after the ravages of the Civil conflict a new formula for power-sharing has emerged among the various confessions, giving the Muslim groups more power than they had before 1982. Moreover, it was Syria, not Israel, which dominated Beirut.[77]

Moreover, the cancellation of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement on March 5, 1984, was another setback to Israeli's objective of increasing its influence over Lebanon.

The dream of Moshe Dayan to annex the territory from the Litani southward could not be realized. To realize the full value of the Litani river, Israel must control an area of Lebanon (either by occupation or through arrangements with a compliant government), far into the Bekka Valley and

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76. Ibid., p.18.

77. Cheryl A. Rubenbery, op.cit., p.26.

well above the Karaoun Dam.[78] The Israelis, who had occupied south Lebanon since 1978, worked on building a tunnel at the 90 degree bend into the Litani which passes within only 2.5 miles of the Israel - Lebanon border - to divert the Litani waters into northern Israel. But diverting the Litani water would be costly for the Israel, both economically and diplomatically, and would anyway only bring a negligible flow of water into Israel since most of the Litani waters upstream have either been redirected through the Markabi-Awali-Joun chain of hydro-electric power stations or used for irrigation in the Bekka Valley as only overspill from the Karaoun Dam flows down the Litani's natural courses.[79]

The "security belt" came into being in the wake of the invasion of March 1978, when the Israeli forces surged into Lebanon with the declared objective of occupying a 10-km wide belt north of the border to prevent Palestinian attacks against Israel. Instead, the forces pushed all the way to the Litani river, occuying more than a tenth of Lebanese territory. Faced with strong international pressure, in the form of UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 426,which called for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Lebanese territories and the establishment of a special

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78. Ibid., p.9.

79. Giles Trendle, "Whose water is it," The Middle East, issue No.207, January 1991, p.19. Also see Time Colone, Sara O'Niel, Ian Meadows etal, "Reports," in Judith Perera, review, "Water Politics, The Middle East, No.76, February 1981

UN force, UNIFIL, Israel partially withdrew in two stages. But just before it had to make the final withdrawal in June 1978, it turned the remaining 10-km strip over to its proxy militia under Major Saad Haddad. While Israel had officially withdrawn, it was no secret that the SLA continued to be "thickended" by Israeli soldiers and that Israeli officers were a permanent presence. UNIFIL was prevented from entering the area. The "security belt" was born.

The establishment of the "security belt" necessitated an important overhauling of the SLA, hitherto an almost exclusively Maronite force composed of local boys - mainly Lebanese army deserters, Kata'ib militants, more recent recruits... An intensive recruitment and training drive was undertaken, aimed at the Shi'a as well, not only to expand the force's numbers but also to avoid the stigma that would accompany a purely Maronite force patrolling a large Muslim region.

In September 1982, the Lebanese resitance was born with the Israel occupation of Beirut. The resistance was tremendously effective. For more than two years, the Israeli losses approached the unprecedented average of one soldier killed a day, and forced Israeli withdrawal from an occupied Arab territory. In June 1985, the Israeli completed the third stage of their withdrawal from the occupied south. The area they refused to evacuate they handed over to the nominal control of the SLA. As was the case in 1978,

however, the Israeli remained, albeit in reduced number, their permanent presence in the zone more discreet.

The new, post - 1985 "security belt" added two new pieces of territory (in the east and in the centre - west) to the former border zone of 1978.[80] The ostensibly unofficial border of the "security zone" constitutes a far more forbidding barrier than the frontiers between most sovereign states. Barbed wire flanks each of the three or four points of access, observation posts from which any movement can be seen line the border, and mine fields have been laid where the terrain makes control difficult. Permits for non-residents to enter the zone must be obtained at the entry points, today generally manned by SLA soldiers alone rather than the mixed SLA - Israeli units.

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80. In contrast to the former southwest-northeast "crescent," the new "security zone" traced somewhat of a semicircle. It was no longer just a buffer zone insulating the Israeli border. It allowed the Israeli to keep their heavy machine guns, not to mention their large cannons, trained on the heart of the Bekka, on part of Mount Lebanon (the essentially Druze and Sunni), and the totality of the south, including Sidon, Nabatiyya, and Tyre. Finally, the guns were trained on all the Palestinian camps.

CONCLUSION

The Republic of Lebanon as it exists today was created in 1920. Prior to this Lebanon referred to only Mount Lebanon. Mount Lebanon had throughout its history provided a refuge to persecuted religious minorities fleeing the wrath of conquering invaders or religious intolerance. Mount Lebanon was in the main the home of two important minority communities namely, the Maronites and the Druze: the former lived in north and the latter inhabited the south. The Druze managed their internal affairs as a virtually autonomous community and developed a peculiar feudal system from the time they were first established in Lebanon. Even during the Mamluk period, the Druze maintained their peculiar feudal traditions with the tacit recognition of the Mamluk government. The central government invested the leading Druze Chief of his day with some formal authority, technically as an officer of the Sultan's provincial cavalry. But as supreme emir, the paramount Druze Chief headed a feudal system based on hereditary land tenure and was the overlord of a number of feudal families who controlled the various Druze districts. They emrged as a dominant political force in Mount Lebanon with the 15th century Tanukhid dynasty.

The Ottomans did not attempt to change the Druze political status. Like their Mamluk predecessors, they permitted the Druze to maintain their special feudal traditions and to manage their internal affairs as they pleased. Under the Ottomans, the Druze came to enjoy a power

and prestige which they had never known under Mamluk. They extended their domain which was originally confined to al-Shuf, both in south Lebanon and towards the north. Druze hegemony established in the early seventeenth century, remained unchallenged for a long time. Although Maronite notables frequently rose to position of influence as the assistants and advisors of the emirs, it was the Druze feudal chiefs who remained the mainstay of the Lebanese Emirate.

Following the establishment of the Emirate, Maronites began to move from northern Lebanon to southern Lebanon. Freedom and protection were extended to them by the Druze feudal lords of the area, particularly in matters of personal safety and the exercise of religious activities. The Maronite Churches, in particular, started to grow and flourish under the auspices of the feudal lords. The monks and their orders cultivated the land of the feudal lords, reclaimed waste lands and purchased land of their own wherever they could. In the early stages of economic relations between the Church and the Druze feudal lords, the church was the weaker and more dependent partner. But as a result of its growing economic strength, the Maronite church began to oppose feudalism in Mount Lebanon with the twin purposes of defending the rights of the peasants perhaps in their own self interest and defeating their political rivals, the feudal lords.

Historically, the Ottomans kept the country divided.

They followed the policy of divide and rule. Thus they encouraged the rift betweeen the rival factions. The Ottomans continued to do this even after succession of Shihabs. The latent rivalry between Yaman and Qays branches of the Druze community culminated in 1711 in the battle of 'Ayn Darah, which resulted in the Yamani Druze having to flee the area for the Hawran. The expulsion of the Yamani Druze from the country was of serious consequence in the long run for it reduced the size of the Druze community and increased the relative numerical strength of the Maronites. The Maronites benefitted considerably from this development of the Druze community as more and more Maronites entered the services of the emirs and settled within the territory of the emirate. They played an indirect role in building the emirate's central powers through their positions as hereditary chieftains in possessions of fiefs.

Thus the Druze-Maronite balance of power underwent a serious change in the eighteenth century as the Maronites replaced the Druze in political predominance. The conversion of Emir Mulhim's sons to christianity in 1756, and the succession of the Maronite Yusuf Shihab in 1770 finally set the seal to the decline of the Druze. However, although the Maronites were now recognizably the dominant group, the Druze remained a powerful force with which the Shihabs had to reckon.

However, Bashir Shihab II further reduced the power of Druze by infringing upon the hereditary privileges of their feudal families and in some cases, such as the Junbalats,

the Imads the Abu Nakads, dispossessed them outright. He followed a policy of favouritism towards the christian majority and at times, instigated them against the Druze. By confiscations and forced sale, Bashir II had robbed the Druze feudal class of vast lands, and these lands had come in time to be redistributed among the rising class of well to do christian villagers and townsmen. Besides, he absorbed under his emirate those prerogatives which were traditionally enjoyed by Druze Chiefs in their districts: they collected taxes for the government at a profit, maintained peace and order and above all exercised judicial authority of the first instance over all civil and criminal cases involving penalties short of death.

Thus, by late eighteenth, more especially, by the nineteenth century, the Maronites emerged on the poltical scence of Lebanon. In this the church played a crucial role, seizing the opportunity offered by emir Bashir II to be dealt into the cental power structure, and determining the direction of the violent events that scarred the epoch. The monk took the lead in voicing the demands of the community and in its ideological and military organization and mobilization. The Maronite church played prominent role in shaping Lebanbon's political history during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the establishment of Geater Lebanon in 1920 was largely the successful culmination of their efforts.

The establishment of Greater Lebanon on 1 September

1920 by France, with the inclusion of the fertile Bekaa plain and the regions around the coastal cities of Sidon, Tripoli and Beirut further complicated the confessional situation. The establishment of Greater Lebanon brought about a great demographic changes. The population of Sunni sect was multiplied approximately eight times and Shi'a strength was vitually quadrupled, while the Maronite population was increased by only one third. Consequently, the Lebanese christian now slightly out-numbered the Muslim. Whereas in the Mutasarrafiya the Maronites had formed an overwhelming majority (59 percent of the total population), in Greater Lebanon they became the largest single community (29 percent of the total population).

The sunni resented the creation of Greater Lebanon because the incorporation of Sunni in Lebanon involved a grave religious, cultural, political and economic crisis and powerful emotional blow. It also accompanied the demise of an independent Arab Kingdom in Arabia, Iraq and Greater Syria in which they formed the overwhelming majority. Furthermore, they were cut off from their coreligionists in Syria and the rest of the Arab World, thereby becoming a minority group in the Lebanese state. They were to be ruled by the French and the Maronites, both Christians.

In the beginning, the Sunnis were reluctant to participate in the political process of Lebanon. An organized Sunni opposition manifested itself in the summer of 1921, when preparation were being made for the census as a first steps towards a general election. The sunni refused

to participate in the census on the grounds that they were being defined as citizens of Greater Lebanon and that this could be interpreted as their recognition of the Lebanese state. The Sunnis also withdrew from the constitutional consultations. It was in the late 1930s and 1940s, with the rise to power of a young generation of Sunni leaders who had grown up under the new Lebanese political system, that the way was opened to a modus vivendi between these leaders and their christian counterparts. However, the effort of the Lebanese sunnis for the integration with Syria ended, when they reached an agreement in 1943 know as National Pact on the question of sharing power with the christians.

The Shi'a Muslim sect came into being as a result of a schism that took place in Islam in the decade after the death of Prophet Muhammad on the question of his successor (Caliphate). They recognized Caliph "Ali, the newphew and son-in-law of the Prophet as the legitimate heir, but not the early three Caliphs - Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Usman. They are the oldest Muslim community in Lebanon. At the time of the First Crusade (1096), the whole country belonged to one or other of the Shi'a communities. Very few Shi'a lived in the cities but a number of important small towns grew up in the Shi'a areas during the period between the two world wars. The vast majority of the Shi'a peasantry lived on meagre plots with poor soil and very limited water resources. They practiced subsistence dry farming. Export of agriculture expanded rapidly. Banking and commercial network based in Beirut, Sidon and Zahle spread throughout the Shi'a

rural areas. This completely restructured traditional social and productive relations.

Shi'a community has been equally peripheral to the Lebanese political system that had developed under the French mandate and was consolidated with independence. The National Pact of 1943 was basically an agreement between Sunni and Maronite, the two leading communities to divide Lebanon into two spheres of influence along Christian - Muslim lines. From the 1920s to the mid 1950s, Shi'a political representation was practically monopolized by six prominent landowning families- the Asads, the Zeins and the Ossirans in southern Lebanon and the Hamadehs, the Haidars and Husseinis in Ba'lbek and Bint Jubayl. During the 1960s and 1970s, the evolving polity produced new forces within the Shi'a community that upset the Shi'a status quo. Rapid socio-economic modernization, the spread of education, urbanization, and the flood of petro-money brought greater mobilization and politicization of the disenfrenchised Shi'a.

The Shi'a now had an active and redicalized intelligentsia, an ambitious and enterprising counter-elite, and other new strata with new demands. They began to challenge the rules of the game and to question the distribution of power and resources in the Lebanese system. In this context, the movement of Imam Musa al-Sadr was born in the early 1970s, an expression of the demographic and socio-economic shift of the Shi'a from the periphery toward

the city-state of Beirut. Following his arrival in Tyre from his native Iran in 1960 to assume the religious leadership position of the Shi'a community in the south, Imam Musa al-Sadr soon turned into an active social reformer. He sought to enter the political arena by politicizing his role as a religious cleric, a complete departure from customary clerical acquiescence. In 1975 Imam Musa al-Sadr founded Lebanese Resistance Battalions (Amal), a militia group, attached to the Movement of Deprived, to protect the community in the Civil war and to defend the south which was left largely on its own following the Civil War. Its creation marked a turning point in the evolution of Shi'a power. It transformed the movement of the Deprived into an armed political organization and, in the process, superseded it as the major Shi'a politico-military organization and one of the leading contender for power and influence.

The salvation Committee formed by president Ilyas Sarkis in June 1982 to face the repurcussions of the Israeli invasion gave rise to the emrgence of Shi'a fundementalist groups in Lebanon. Husayn al-Musawi, a key leading figure in Amal, objected to Berri's acceptance of membership in the committee. Later on, he resigned from Amal and formed his own Islamic Amal. He represented a complete departure, from the traditional Shi'a line of Lebanese patriotism as represented by Sadr and his wish to mobilize the community for the cause of a world-wide Islamic revolution. Musawi embraced khomeini's ideology, including the Ayatollah's interpretation of " the guardianship of the jurisconsult"

(velayet-e-faqih). Hizbollah, another fundamentalist group also came into being in 1982 at the initiative of a group of Islamic 'Ulama' close to Muhammad Husayn Fadlullah. The conservative and orthodox Shi'a theological school believes that justice and equality can only be achieved with the return of the twelfth Imam. Hizbollah believes that justice and equality can be achieved through Human efforts, through a revolutionary proces. Fadlullah discarded the notion of Taqiya and advocated armed struggle against Muslim government which stray from religious tenets. Fadlullah has been less willing than Islamic Amal's Musawi to embrace whole - heartedly the idea of an Islamic republic in Bierut.

The fundamentalist-militant groups activated the Shi'a doctrine of martyrdom and self-sacrifice against oppression and operationlized it into direct action. Young Shi'a were exhorted to emulate the much-celebrated martyrdom of Imam Hysayn by staging suicide attacks on Israeli and Western targets in Lebanon. Suicide car bombings were carried out against the Israeli forces in November 1983 and continued through 1985, even after their withdrawal to their self-proclaimed security zone in souther Lebanon along Israeli's border. The attacks boosted the image of the radical groups as the most prominent element in compelling Israeli's retreat. A series of suicide bombing were staged in 1983-84 against the US embassy and the US and French military compounds, prompting the withdrawal of the Multi National Force (MNF) in 1984 and the termination of Western influence in Lebanon. Thus the Shi'a emerged as a powerful force in

1990s in Lebanon.

Confessionalism which embodied in the Lebanese constitution of 1926 in its article 95 reads: "As a provisional measure and for the sake of jusitce and amity, the sects shall be equitably represented in public employment and in the composition of the ministry, provided such measures will not harm the general welfare of the state". Confessionalism, further, strengthened by the National Pact of 1943, it was agreed upon that the President of the Republic was to be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Muslim, sepaker of the Chamber of Deputies a Shi'a Muslim, the Deputy Sepeaker a Greek Orthodox, the Defence Minister a Druze, and the Commander of the Military, a Maronite Christian. Furthermore, seats in the Chamber of Deputies were divided among Christians and Muslims in a 6 to 5 ratio based on the official census of 1932.

Confessionalism served a number of conflict management function. It removed potentially uncontrollable issues from the day to day political arena. It accomplished this end by ensuring to all the sects that the normal competition for power and influence would not lead to unacceptable domination by any one of them. Although in a important way it neutralized sectarian competition, it also institutionalized sectarian structures and perpetuated sectarian identifications. The requirements of proportionality introduced additional administrative inefficiency, compared to a system of appointment by merit. Nor did the system appear to be responsive or structurally

flexible in the face of modernization and its attendant governmental problems, the spread of new radical ideologies and the growth of new organizations and counter elites. In short, the confessional solution worked well when there was not very much for government to do.

Abolition of confessionalism from Lebanon's political framework is a major issue. Most Lebanese leaders, at least outwardly, deplore the contemporary confessional nature of the state. And it is through the abolition of this system that the Muslim community, now the majority in the country, aims to redress the existing distribition of power in the state and the concomitant special privileges which the Maronites have enjoyed. All Muslim leaders and parties broadly agree on the desirability of abolishing political confessionalism of all levels, including that affecting political and administrative appointments and parliamentary representation. This has led to consistant demands for reform of the electoral law, which provides for parliamentary elections to be held on a sectarian basis and regulates voting accordingly, and for change in Article 95 of the constitution, which provides a confessional basis for public appointments. Abolishing only the political aspects of confessionalism would to a great extent meet the demands of Muslims for their personal and family affairs to be governed by religious rather than civil law. Ever since its formation in 1969, the National Movement, under the leadership of Kamal Junbalat, had also pressed and agitated in favour of a radical reform of the Lebanese political

system.

Although confessionalism is being criticised for many reasons, yet it is an ideal political formula for Lebanon, a country composed of many religious comunities, each with a keen sense of its peculiar historical and social identity and interest. That sectarian loyalties in Lebanon is strong beyond dispute, and it is hardly imaginable that a political system which did not take these loyalties into consideration could be successfully established in the country within the framework of democracy. Indispensability of confessionalism was also felt at the Taif Conference held in 1989 which decided to retain it.

The Lebanese Civil war which started in 1975 is multi-dimensional, the combination of foreign forces and intervention have intensified the conflict among the Lebanese. But the Lebanese Civil War is primarily the result of domestic and indigenous conditions that have shaped the political cultures and socio-economic formations of the Lebanese confessional communities. Three internal factors can be identified that were instrumental in leading upto a situation of civil war. These are (1) the Emergence of Class Divisions in Lebanese society and the coincidence of this division with the existing religious divisions in Lebanon, (2) The Rigidity of the Political System and (3) Presence of a large number of armed Palestinians.

The most significant aspect of the Lebanese economy before independence was the predominance of service sector.

Under French mandate and even after independence the economic development in Lebanon further boosted the services sector which was dominated by Christians while the agriculture sector dominated by Muslims, remained neglected. Muslim felt that the government was not doing anything to improve their socio-economic condition. Secondly, the Muslims, especially, Shi'a felt that the allocations of parliamentary, cabinet and administrative posts which was based on the French sponsored census of 1932 has become absolete and did not reflect the true demographic situtation. Besides, the electoral law also worked against the ideological parties. According to this law a Lebanese citizen could exercise his right to vote only in place of his birth. The poor Muslim migrants living in poverty belt and around Beirut and other cities could not usually afford to travel back to their districts of origin just for the sake of casting a ballot. Moreover, the secular organizations were suppressed on the ground of preserving the Lebanese identity. As the new poltical forces could not enter the political arena as it existed, they began to advocate the overthrow of the political system itself. Thirdly, the Palestinian guerrillas who fell back into Lebanon after losing their battle in Jordon in 1970 were sympathized by Muslims while Christians perceived them as a threat to their domination. Thus, Christians prepared themselves for a showdown with Palestinians. While Lebanese Muslim groups turned to the Palestinians for arms and support. All these three factors contributed to Civil War

which started in 1975.

Since the outbreak of Civil War various outside power and forces have intervened openly or covertly on one side or the other. Syria intervened in 1976 due to its national interests whether military, political, economic or strategic. Syrian intervention increased the military power of Shi'a, especially that of Amal militia. Although, Amal always sided with Syria but the latter did never allow the former to completely crush Hizbollah. Thus, Syria maintained a power balance between various militias and no single militia could become so powerful as to defeat the other one. Syria also ensure the unity of Lebanon and frustrated the Christians attempt of partitioning Lebanon along religious lines. Israel which intervened in 1978 and again in 1982 with the purpose of ending the armed Palestinians on her northern border succeeded in its mission upto some extent. But failed in establishing a Maronite dominated state in Lebanon. However, Israel succeeded in carving out a security zone in south Lebanon contrlled by South Lebanon Army dominated by Christians.

Fed up of prolong Civil War Christians and Muslims reached an agreement in Taif in 1989. This agreement reduced the powers of Christian President and gave equal representation to Christians and Muslims in Parliament. Now the executive power will be exercised by Lebanese cabinet. The main beneficiary of the changes was the office of the Prime Minister, who became the head of the government, speaking in its name, implementing its policies and

coordinating the various ministries. Maronite lost their political dominance while the political claims of Shi'a were blunted in the Taif accord in favour of Sunni Muslims. Shi'a challenge ahead is to translate their strength into actual political power. Druze will continue to play important political role being a cohesive community and due to their concentration in Shuf mountains. Confesionalism is there to stay because it is an ideal formula for Lebanon, a country composed of many religious communities, each with a keen sense of its peculier historical and social identity and interest. Civil War has ended because people of Lebanon realized its futility.

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